THE EXPOSITORY TIMES.

Notes of Recent Exposition.

A NEW book by that learned and incisive Catholic philosopher, Professor Etienne GILSON, is assured of a wide welcome. Exiled from France, he holds a Chair at Toronto, at the Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies. *God and Philosophy* (Milford; 12s. net) consists of four lectures recently given at Indiana University.

The scope of the book is indicated by the fact that in it the conception of God is examined as it is dealt with in Greek Philosophy, Christian Philosophy, Modern Philosophy, and Contemporary Thought. The aim and intention of the book is, however, to treat of one aspect of the metaphysical problem of God: the relation which obtains between our notion of God and the demonstration of His existence.

Speaking of these Lectures the author says, 'I would like to think that, after reading them, some among my readers will at least understand the meaning of their own words when they say that the existence of God cannot be demonstrated. Nobody really knows that this cannot be done unless he realizes at least what it would be to do it. The only philosopher who has made me clearly realize the full metaphysical implications of this problem is Saint Thomas Aquinas.'

And he adds, that the only pertinent solution of the problem of God is also to be found in Saint Thomas Aquinas: 'not the supreme carpenter of Paley or the supreme watchmaker of Voltaire, but the infinite act of self-existence, by whom all the rest is, and as compared with whom all the rest is as though it were not.'

The infinite Act of self-existence is the first philosophical principle according to Aquinas. How did he come by it? The answer is, through Moses and Aristotle.

Aristotle was the first among the Greek philosophers to effect a clear conjunction of the first philosophical principle with the notion of god. The prime mover of the Aristotelian universe is also its supreme god. And the prime mover may be described as a self-subsisting and eternal Act of thinking, as a divine self-thinking Thought. But so to describe it is to realize that the supreme god of Aristotle has not made this world of ours, nor, consequently, can he take care of the beings or things in it. With Aristotle, the Greeks had gained a rational theology, but they had lost their religion.

While the Greek philosophers were wondering what place to assign to their gods in a rational or intelligible universe, the Jews had already found the God who was to provide philosophy with its answer. Not a God who had been discovered as a solution of metaphysical problems, but a God who had revealed Himself and declared His name. Yahweh, 'He who is,' was the name of the Jewish God.

But the Jewish God ceased to be the private God of an elect race, becoming through the preaching of the Christian gospel the universal God of all men. The result was that the Christian thinker, whose first principle in religion was 'He who is,' was bound also to posit 'He who is' as his first principle in philosophy. Thus Christianity came to establish existence as both the supreme attribute of the divinity and the deepest layer of reality.

When we read Aquinas we find indeed that the self-thinking Thought of Aristotle has become an essential element of his natural theology, but not without first undergoing a metamorphosis. It has become, instead of 'That which is,' the 'He who is' of the Hebrew-Christian tradition, being thus raised to the level of God. And so we see how the Jewish God gave to philosophy its answer to the metaphysical problem of God.

'Because the supreme Thought of Aristotle was not "He who is," it could not give existence; hence the world of Aristotle was not a created world. Because the supreme Thought of Aristotle was not the pure Act of existing, its self-knowledge did not entail the knowledge of all being, both actual and possible; the god of Aristotle was not a providence.'

We have said enough to give an impression of how Aquinas came to posit as the first philosophical principle an infinite Act of self-existence (if Professor GILSON be right in his explanation). How and why that truth became lost is a further problem; and Professor GILSON would solve it on the basis of an inquiry into the Cartesian revolution in philosophy, which produced for gods 'mere by-products born of the philosophical decomposition of the Christian living God.'

For the rest, we would call attention to the spirited defence in this book of the truth of final causes in Nature, as against contemporary agnosticism and positivism deriving from Kant and Comte, and as also against unwarrantable assumptions of contemporary scientists. There is much point in the remark: 'For centuries final causes have been mistaken for scientific explanations by so many generations of philosophers that to-day many scientists still consider the fear of final causes as the beginning of scientific wisdom.'

In his remarkably interesting book, *Plans for a Better World*, certainly one of the most arresting chapters is that which contains General Smuts' address as President of the British Association in its centenary year. It begins with the question: What sort of world-picture is science leading to?—a question of importance because our world-view is closely connected with our sense of ultimate values, our reading of the riddle of the universe, and of the meaning of life and human destiny. In answering the question General Smuts gives us a vivid sketch of the development of the scientific interpretation of reality.

The first period is that of *Common Sense*. Science arose from our ordinary experience and common-sense outlook. The world of common sense is a world of matter, of material stuff, of real separate things and their properties which act on each other and cause changes in each other. To the various things observable by the senses were added the imperceptible things—space and time, invisible forces, life and the soul. And, finally, the supernatural was added to the natural world. And thus a complex empirical world-view arose, full of latent contradictions, but with a solid basis of actual experience and facts behind it.

The second period is that of *Mechanism*. This was the result of nineteenth-century scientific activity. On the basis of research and experiment a closed mechanistic order of Nature was constructed, forming a rigid deterministic scheme. Into this scheme it has been difficult to fit entities like life and mind; and the scientific attitude has been to put them to a suspense account and to await developments. As to the supernatural, science is or has been agnostic, if not frankly sceptical. Such in very general terms was the scientific outlook of the nineteenth century, which has not yet completely passed away. With qualifications it may be said that it preserved a good deal of the common-sense view. Nineteenth-century science was, in fact, a system of purified, glorified common sense.

The third period is that of to-day. It is difficult to give it a name, for it has not yet achieved that unity which makes one achievement stand out as embracing all the rest. In physical science its two great discoveries, General Smuts says, are the fact that space and time are not separate entities but characteristics of the one indivisible reality—*space-time*; and, secondly, the revolutionary *quantum* theory which introduces an indeterminate element into Nature, a Puck-like unaccountability that has a shattering influence on the deterministic idea of the nineteenth century. In biological science the main discovery is that of organic evolution. In philosophy the tendency of all the above events has been to make philosophy once again metaphysic in the original sense.

If this brief summary is too compressed, there may at any rate be clearly stated what General Smuts regards as the result of all this rapid change in ideas. For one thing, matter has disappeared into the blue of energy. It is essentially immaterial structure. It cannot be fundamentally different from life or even from mind. These are all coming together into a new unity or monism. Thus materialism has gone by the board. The world-view that science is groping to is a great whole of which these three entities are aspects.

Further, the iron determinism of the older science, so contrary to direct human experience, so destructive of the free activity of life and mind, as well as subversive of the moral responsibility of the individual, has been materially recast. Relativity reduces substance to configuration or patterns; matter is, according to this view, a sort of curvature of the basic element of space-time. It is a bulge, a knot, an affair just of organization. And the Quantum physics makes indeterminism a radical feature of Nature. Thus determinism and materialism have got their quietus from science itself.

'This liberation of life and spirit from the iron rule of necessity,' says General Smuts, 'is one of

the greatest gains from the recent scientific advances. Nature is not a closed physical circle, but has left the door open to the emergence of life and mind and the development of human personality. . . . The view to which Huxley once gave such eloquent and poignant expression, of a dualism implanted in the heart of Nature, of a deadly struggle between cosmic law and moral law, is no longer justified by the subsequent advances of science.'

And, finally, great as is the physical universe which confronts us as a given fact, no less great is our reading and evaluation of it in the world of values, as seen in the intellectual disciplines, culminating in religion. Without this revelation of inner meaning and significance the external physical universe would be but an immense empty shell. The brute fact gets its meaning, and a new world arises which gives to Nature whatever significance it has.

One of the greatest tasks before the human race will be to link up science with these ethical values, and thus remove grave dangers threatening our future. A serious lag has already developed between our rapid scientific advance and our stationary ethical development, a lag which has already found expression in the greatest tragedy of history. Science and religion have too long been separated. It is one of our supreme duties to bring them together. An adequate world-view will give them both a place in that unity of being and life to which thought is tending.

The subject of Church union occupies in these days a prominent place in Christian minds and in the Councils of the Church. And in view of the desperate need of the world everyone must feel that it is a matter of supreme importance and urgency. All who have the advancement of the Kingdom of God at heart must earnestly labour and pray that the spiritual unity of the Church may be made more visible and impressive.

Two books dealing with this subject have recently come to hand, both written from the High Church point of view. In both of them the subject is discussed with competence, courtesy and a marked degree of Christian charity, but the writers seem to be completely ignorant of what we may call the Reformed theory of the Church as held by Presbyterians and Free Churchmen generally. Indeed they can hardly bring themselves to acknowledge these bodies as being parts of the true Catholic Church in any proper sense. One of these books, 'Society: Natural and Divine,' is reviewed elsewhere in this issue. The other, *Revelation and Reunion*, by the Rev. Gerald Webb Broomfield, D.D. (S.P.C.K.; 7s. 6d. net), may here be made the subject of a few brief notes.

Dr. Broomfield, who has a wide connexion with missions, writes his book as 'A Response to Tambaram.' He is convinced that 'in our approach to the whole subject of Christian unity we need to delve more deeply than has perhaps been customary in this connexion into the fundamental question of the manner in which our beliefs are formed.' Accordingly he devotes a considerable part of his book to an interesting review of the Way of Knowledge through Reasoning, Faith, and Revelation. Then he proceeds to apply these principles to an historical and practical study of the structure of the Church.

While it is the primary function of the Church to declare and preserve the faith once for all delivered to the saints, a fact which cannot be too strongly insisted upon, yet the Spirit of Christ dwells in the living Church to interpret, to guide, to inspire, and under His guidance the Church is active in relation to the revelation and not merely the custodian of a lifeless deposit. So far all would agree. But Dr. Broomfield proceeds to draw some very dubious conclusions from this doctrine. He lays so great stress on the divine guidance and takes so little account of the human imperfections of the Church that he comes perilously near to making the Church, of the early centuries at least, wellnigh infallible.

In doctrine, for example, he practically puts the Nicene and Chalcedonian creeds on a level with Scripture. 'The authority behind these two creeds is essentially the same as that behind the formation of the New Testament Canon. If we believe that the Holy Spirit enabled the Church to discriminate between the writings in its possession and to recognize some of them as an inspired record of the revelation in Christ and of the Apostolic teaching, it is difficult to avoid the conviction that He also guided the same Church, acting in the same kind of way during the same period, in its elucidation and definition of the meaning of the revelation.' This is plausible but hardly logical. For obviously it is one thing to discern truth when presented to the mind, and quite another thing to express it in one's own way. A critic may have discernment to appreciate the genius of Shakespeare and to discriminate between his work and that of inferior poets, but it by no means follows that when that critic endeavours

to express Shakespeare's meaning in his own words his essay will have all the genius and glory of Shakespeare. It is one thing for the Church to recognize the inspiration of St. John or St. Paul; it is quite another thing for the Church to produce something of equal inspiration and authority.

Then in regard to the government of the Church Dr. BROOMFIELD follows a similar line of argument. He freely admits that the Church of the New Testament was not episcopal in the modern sense. 'Presbyter and bishop were the titles which came to be regularly used of the local ministry, and I am content to assume that in the Apostolic Age there was generally no distinction between them.' During the second and third centuries, however, under the guidance of the Spirit, the episcopal system of Church government was evolved. This system must therefore be regarded as of divine authority and unalterable, a system essential not only to the well-being but to the very being of the Church. The bishop is the divinely appointed guardian of the truth, and he has authority to order and govern the Church, an authority derived by descent from the Apostles. The gospel message is authenticated by the bishop, and the Sacraments are duly administered only by those whom he has ordained to administer them. Any other ministration of the Word and Sacraments must therefore be regarded, however regretfully, as irregular and invalid.

This is a system of Church government which is monarchical and autocratic, and which finds its logical outcome in the Papacy. For if the unity of the diocese centres in the bishop, and the unity of a larger area or province of bishoprics centres in the archbishop, it follows that the unity of the whole Church must needs be centred in some single authority who shall have divine power to speak the final word and be the ultimate court of appeal. Hence we are not surprised to find Dr. BROOMFIELD looking hopefully towards Rome. It does, indeed, stick in his throat as a loyal Englishman that the head of the Church and God's representative on earth should always be an Italian. There was some hope, he says, that 'if Italy entered the war on the side of Germany, the Pope would leave the country.' This fond hope was, of course, disappointed, but the time may come when the Pope will be less Italian and more cosmopolitan, and 'then he will be able to speak to the world with the true voice of the world-wide Church.'

Now all this raises some very deep questions as to the seat of authority and the relation of the Holy Spirit to the Church. 'Authority is from above,' says Dr. BROOMFIELD with all Romanists and High Churchmen. To that we all agree, for even Pontius Pilate had no authority except what was given him from above. But the crucial question is, Through what channels does that authority come? The High Churchman takes for granted that it can only come down through the hierarchy, and he seems to imagine that those who have not that hierarchy are affirming that authority comes from beneath. A gross misunderstanding! All the churches believe that authority comes from above, but the Reformed churches maintain that that authority may be conveyed and may express itself through the whole body of Christ's believing people as freely as through a priesthood.

Take a political analogy. There was a time when High Churchmen upheld the divine right of kings, and there is certainly more Scripture authority for that doctrine than for the divine right of bishops. But that doctrine is dead, not because democracy is necessarily godless or implies that power comes from beneath, but because the enlightened nations of the world believe that their affairs will be better guided by the united wisdom which God gives to the whole people than by the will of any single individual, however gifted or however ancient in lineage. But now, in a world which has renounced the divine right of kings, and which repudiates that doctrine when it is seen resurrected in the hateful 'Führer' principle, Christian people are invited and instructed to believe in the divine right of bishops.

The question is not whether one creed is better than another, or one system of Church government more efficient than another. The ultimate question is whether the Church is a living Church or is partly fossilized, whether the Spirit is free to-day to move and inspire the Church as in former times. The High Churchman would practically confine the free action of the Spirit to the second and third centuries when creed and constitution became fixed and rigid. In that case the history of the Church is like the history of the hermit crab, which in its early life enjoys freedom of movement, but later plays the game of 'safety first,' renouncing its freedom to take refuge within a hard sea-shell. So, we are asked to believe, the Church, for the safeguarding of its doctrine and life, is doomed for all time to live and work within the rigid limits of an episcopal carapace.

But the Church of Christ in every age is a living Church, free to follow the guidance of the living Spirit of God. It was natural for the Church of

the early centuries to express its faith in terms of Greek philosophy. But Greek thought-forms are not for ever sacrosanct, and it is equally legitimate for the Church of to-day to give expression to the one true faith in the language and thought-forms of our age. As for Church government, it is matter of common knowledge that monarchical episcopacy was closely modelled on the government of the Roman Empire. Naturally so in that time. But are we to suppose that it is the unalterable will of God that the government of His Church shall throughout all ages conform to the model of the militaristic and heathen Empire of Rome? Why should not the Church of our time express its unity after the model of the British Empire, a community of free peoples, not held together within the framework of a cast-iron system, but, what is far finer, unified and fused together by the ardour of a common spirit. Standing on the threshold of a new age and about to enter on untrodden ways, this is no time for the Church to creep for safety into any ancient shell but to maintain her freedom to the full. If she attempts to anchor for ever on the early centuries she is doomed to be submerged by the rising tide. Her only safety, as it is her bounden duty, is to hoist her sails to the free winds of heaven and to voyage onwards through strange and uncharted seas in fearless faith that the Spirit of God is still her living and sufficient guide.

Fluctuations in the Hope of Immortality.

By the Reverend R. C. Ford, M.A., B.D., Huddersfield.

The hope of immortality has waxed and waned in various ages and social groups. Sir James Frazer, who has made special study of the uncivilized races, tells us that amongst savages 'a life after death is not a matter of speculation and conjecture, of hope and fear; it is a practical certainty which the individual as little dreams of doubting as he doubts the reality of his conscious existence.' Doubt comes with civilization. In Buddhism the hope seems rather to be in the extinction than the immortality of man. But in Egypt the immortal hope was so strongly held that more attention was devoted to the construction of tombs than of homes for the living. However much the Israelites may have accepted the Egyptian conception during their sojourn in Egypt they seem to have abandoned it very largely when they escaped from that land. In much of the Old Testament no trace of such hope can be discerned; though in seasons of spiritual insight there has been intense longing for some assurance. It is only when we reach the New Testament that we find it taken for granted that a glorious eternity awaits the disciple of Christ.

In recent generations the immortal hope has burned very dimly. George Adam Smith said that 'the tide of human interest is steadily ebbing away from the shores of another life.' If modern interest has waned it is not because the promises of the gospel are less understood, but simply that interest has shifted from the future to the present. This is understandable in the case of young people to whom 'three score years and ten' seems ample for the realization of all their projects. Their present tasks are too absorbing to permit distraction by attention to other interests. Like the dying man of whom Thoreau speaks who showed reluctance to think about that future which awaited him, they too would say, 'One world at a time, brother; one world at a time . . .' The distant stars excite little interest when the sun is shining, even though the sun be but the nearest star.

Dr. George Jackson has been insisting in the pages of the *Manchester Guardian* that there is at the present time an urgent call to declare without uncertainty what is the Christian teaching concerning the Hereafter. There is indeed, for every day thousands of men are being hurried over the brink into eternity, many of them not yet having tasted the joys of the present life. They and their dear ones must form some conviction of what the future holds for them. Canon Hannay says that during the last war a young officer asked his padre: 'I wish you would tell us what you think about it. Is there really anything afterwards? . . . I never doubted about any of the things I was taught. I just took them as they came. Anyhow I didn't bother. But now I want to know.' The same considerations must operate in the mind of many a lad to-day. The proximity of death compels thought and interest.

There are moods in which the thought of eternal existence is repellent. Years ago we were discussing whether life was worth living. When people set so little store on the present life it was

unlikely that they would desire another. The mere thought of eternity may be terrifying, especially when under a sense of condemnation. The present life may be so little satisfying that one dreads going through the weary round again. An American tombstone, erected in the boom years bears the inscription :

> 'Don't bother me now, don't bother me never ;
> I want to be dead for ever and ever.'

After a hard day's work one is glad to lie down and sleep, always with the consciousness born of experience that in sleep tired energies will be reinvigorated. We might resist the soothing torpor if we thought it a lapse into permanent unconsciousness.

Short views of life may tend to indifference about the future ; but when the issues assume tremendous magnitude they must be viewed on the background of eternity. Those who can remember the preaching of half a century ago, or more, know that sermons on heaven and hell were common. To-day such themes seldom affect the preacher in his preparation for worship. He is more interested in the conditions which favour morality, and wants to see a world fit for heroes, rather than to produce the heroes. It seems more practical to deal with the second commandment about loving one's neighbour, than with the first about loving God. It is in times of storm and crisis that the other world looms large in our outlook. The *Divine Comedy*, *Paradise Lost*, and the *Pilgrim's Progress* were all produced in such ages. At the beginning of Richard Baxter's *Saints' Everlasting Rest*, he tells us that he began to write because the physician had warned him. 'While I was in health I had not the least thought of writing books, or of serving God in any more public way than by preaching. But when I was weakened by much bleeding . . . and was sentenced to death by my physicians I began to contemplate more seriously the Everlasting Rest which I apprehended myself just on the borders of.' What is distant seems vague and unimportant : only as an event looms nearer and nearer does it exert the maximum demand upon our attention. So it comes to pass that at intervals men are aroused by some great tragedy in world history, or by some private bereavement ; though in the end it is always a private experience. When that happens, like the young officer we want to know, and explanations that are merely traditional no longer satisfy. We do not want to be deluded by wishful thinking ; so that while our interest is intensified our confidence is rudely shaken.

That there is close connexion between bodily conditions and inward experience is obvious, so that one is tempted to consider them as mutually dependent. What happens when the body ceases to function ? We are invisible selves signalling to one another from behind barriers. It is imperative for us to have clear conviction as to whether the signaller is no more after the signals cease to come through. That enchanting something which gave value and meaning to the form has gone. The charm has departed from the inert form. What has befallen the life that once animated it ? Though we frame mental pictures for ourselves we cannot know whether they possess any truth. We only know that the channel of communication has been broken, and that there is no further response. In the agony of separation our hearts cry out for an answer to our appeals. It seems to us that if the loved one is anywhere in God's universe there ought to be some indication. It is not logical trains of thought which we then desire, but personal intercourse. Sin is not the only sting of death, but also ignorance. We do not know what happens when we are hurried over the verge,

> And whether, stepping forth, my soul shall see
> New prospects, or fall sheer—a blinded thing !
> There is, O grave, thy hourly victory,
> And there, O death, thy sting.

Here, then, is the dilemma which confronts us. Viewing events from the ordinary sense level all is over ; the tyrant has liquidated his opponent, and the lover has resigned himself to contemplate a life of loneliness. If sense manifestations are accepted there is no reason why we should give further thought to the departed. We shall see the dear face no more, and all relationship appears to have come to an end. Why hesitate about enjoying the good things which life still holds for us ? We have our life to live and must live it on one assumption or the other, either that the dear one is no more, or that the separation is only temporary. The remarkable thing is that bereaved persons by some necessity of their own nature live with the thought of the dear departed ever before them ; and apparently this has always been so. It does not appear to be merely survival of antiquated superstition, or the expression of baseless prejudice. No one would accuse A. J. Balfour of slipshod thinking or of being hidebound by the prejudices of the ignorant ; yet when he came to his death-bed we are told that he looked forward to the end with great calmness, sure that death was the gateway to an ampler world.

Why does one feel under the necessity of acting as though death were not the end but a beginning of fuller life ? The fact is that in his activities man is governed not by the obvious, but by an inner standard There is compulsion upon him

about which he does not argue but simply accepts. Deeds of heroism are common to-day, many of which appear to be done without anterior thought. Occasionally there is some indication of the hidden motive, as in the letters of two different airmen which have been lately published, and these are but samples of many more which might be produced. They express a clear and overwhelming conviction that it is better to die in the discharge of duty than save themselves by cowardice or selfishness. Life must have been very dear to all of those who had dear ones eagerly awaiting their return. If nothing but a blank follows this life they acted foolishly, throwing away all their opportunities to sink into permanent unconsciousness. Ignorant as they were about what was before them they were absolutely confident that they were doing the only possible or reasonable thing. In such times of emergency men are not determined by calculating reason, but by some deeper compulsion which they only dimly understand. In spite of the obvious they prefer to trust the inward voice, confident that in the end they will be justified. The hero might fail in providing satisfactory justification for his act, but the act itself is the deepest expression of his real faith, and far more cogent than any reasons he might urge.

The vividness of our interest and the firmness of our conviction concerning the life to come seem to be partly dependent upon the affection that exists between us. If we were isolated units we might not be much concerned about our future fate ; but the fact that we mean so much to each other makes a vast difference. No normal man could stand beside the bed of a dying friend, and say good-bye to him not caring whether they ever met again. Anybody who could be thus indifferent would lack some of the essential qualities of a true man. And those who are dying are usually less concerned about their own departure than about the lot of the loved ones they leave behind. The disciples could not bear to think of life without the Master, and protested that it was impossible for Him to be separated from them. But He, knowing what was about to happen, was much more concerned about them than about Himself. 'I will not leave you orphans. I will come to you.' The very meaning of the Christian faith is that love is the most enduring element in the universe, abiding for ever. It is not merely that we retain in memory the thought of the departed, but that there is still a link binding us into unity. Paul never rises so high as when he was assured that Love never faileth.

We can make no sense of the human story if we attempt to explain it apart from the related facts of sin and sacrifice. Our fathers had a notion that if there had been no sin there would have been no death, and that humanity was saved from the dire consequences of sin by the sacrifice of the Son of God. Our records show many instances of the unselfish casting away of life, but nothing which compares with the act of Jesus Christ. He might have avoided death at the time and in the manner in which it came to Him, had He been so minded. It was a death chosen for the salvation of mankind. None who knew Him ever attributed to Him any moral fault. And those who knew Him best and loved Him most passed through such an experience as had never before been known. They were astounded and delighted by convincing evidence that He was not the victim of death, but the Victor over it. Tremendous weight hangs upon that manifestation of Himself as alive to those who were crushed by the awful calamity of the Crucifixion. Until He yielded up His spirit they trusted Him, but afterwards were cast into the depths of despair. At the time when their grief was overwhelming, and all the hopes they had cherished lay in ruins, they suddenly became possessed of a new certainty which they dare scarcely believe for very joy. Nobody can put out his best for an uncertainty, and the degree of their conviction is seen in the height to which they rose, so far above the mean level of their previous attainment.

The measure of a man's conviction is not his profession but his behaviour. Emerson has told us that a man's actions are the picture book of his creed. He may think that he is basing his life on certain beliefs but the real creed basis is that which makes him what he is. And the remarkable fact is that this conviction of immortality has issued in lives which have reached the zenith. The conviction accords with the richest life, and what raises the present life to its highest attainment is in accord with the innermost nature of things. It is an expression of the dynamic which inspires creation. Noble character cannot be built upon delusion and unreliable convictions. If the deepest within man had no more substance than the film of a soap bubble, we should have to conclude that the blowing of such momentary scintillations were the great project upon which the Creator was amusing Himself. Against such conclusion our nature recoils ; we are convinced that what makes for the highest life must be most in accord with the nature of things, that is, must be the expression of the will of God.

So vast a theme cannot be considered in all its aspects in one short paper ; but before concluding one set of facts must be noted. It would appear that as men approach the margin there comes an access of conviction regarding what lies before

them, such as can only be expressed by symbol, but which seems to indicate a new intensity of faith akin to vision. Elijah is said to have ascended in a chariot of fire. Those who looked upon the dying Stephen saw his face as it had been the face of an angel, and onlookers were sure that he perceived the eternal reality. It has been the experience of many to note that as some dearly loved friend has crossed the border a smile of radiant beauty has for a moment illuminated their countenances. Physiologists may attribute such indications to physical causes, but to a believer the physical is a parable of the spiritual, and an indication of the dawning of the great glory. When missionary work began on the Congo the death-rate among the pioneers was heavy. As one missionary was nearing the end he said to the brother attending him: 'I thought it was like the great (Congo) river, but it is only a streamlet.' Could he already discern the other side?

Literature.

SÖREN KIERKEGAARD.

In last month's issue we took notice of the appearance in English translation of Kierkegaard's 'Stages on Life's Way,' in which in 1845 this remarkable Danish thinker gathered up many of the chief thoughts of his previous writings. Among those writings was one called 'Philosophical Fragments' (1844), pseudonymous like the other writings and as such not necessarily representing Kierkegaard's own positions; in it the questions are handled, 'Is an historical point of departure possible for an eternal consciousness; how can such a point of departure have any other than a mere historical interest; is it possible to base an eternal happiness upon historical knowledge?' These questions were propounded in view of the 'System,' that is, the philosophy of Hegel, and in reaction from it, and in the answer to them we come close to the real Kierkegaard, who refused to allow the historical in religion to be caught up into and merged in the eternal.

We come closer still in the work now under review, *Concluding Unscientific Postscript* (Milford; 36s. net), translated from the Danish by Professor David F. Swenson, and completed after his death, and provided with Introduction and Notes by Professor Walter Lowrie. In fact this work with the 'Philosophical Fragments' constitutes Kierkegaard's chief contribution to philosophy. It is still pseudonymous, as coming from 'Johannes Climacus,' but Kierkegaard himself sponsors the publication.

The title wants explanation. The work is a 'Postscript' to the 'Philosophical Fragments,' which had a reception in accordance with the author's wishes; that is, it created no sensation! 'The book was permitted to enter the world unnoticed, without fuss or fury, without shedding of ink or blood. It was neither reviewed nor mentioned anywhere. No learned outcry was raised to mislead the expectant multitude; no shouts of warning from our literary sentinels served to put the reading public on its guard; everything happened with due decency and decorum.'

Noting the combination here of almost morbid sensitivity and ironical humour characteristic of Kierkegaard, we pass to the significance of 'Concluding' in the title. It marks the writer's resolve to be done with literary venture and devote himself to pastoral work. But this was not to be. Stung by the satire of the *Korsar*, he launched upon a series of religious writings under his own name, in which he sought to impress upon his contemporaries what it is to be a Christian.

Then there is the word 'Unscientific' in the title. By use of it Kierkegaard would separate himself from all that is *wissenschaftlich*, or savouring of professorial pedantry. As the editor well remarks, 'A glance at the Table of Contents is enough to reveal that in this book all accepted rules for the composition of a philosophic treatise are defied. It mingles together a little of everything, a little about history, a good deal about "speculation" and metaphysics, "Something about Lessing," more than a little psychology, still more about religion and about Christianity in particular, the most subtle and abstract definitions alternating with poetical prose, and the whole of it spiced with the condiment of humour.'

It is not altogether surprising that after three years, as Kierkegaard himself reported, only sixty copies of the book had been sold and nowhere had it been reviewed. The professorial mind is impatient of the *unwissenschaftlich*, and the popular mind does not like poetry and history when adulterated with metaphysics or theology. And yet time has brought its recompense. In these recent years both philosophy and theology have felt the impress of the mind of this lonely thinker.

We are indebted to the late Professor Swenson for the greater part of the translation, which is possibly as good and readable as any English translation of so difficult a writer can be; and to Professor Lowrie for completing his friend's great task and so introducing to the English-speaking world Kierkegaard's most significant work. But the warning should be given that it is a work not easy to be understood.

W. Fulton.

CRISIS ON THE FRONTIER.

That admirable library of sermonic literature—'The Scholar as Preacher' Series—is enriched by its most recent addition—*Crisis on the Frontier*, by the Rev. Arthur A. Cowan, M.A., minister of Inverleith Church, Edinburgh (T. & T. Clark; 7s. net). The volume is not so portly as some of its predecessors; it could not be under war-time conditions of publishing. The publishers, however, deserve praise for the way in which difficulties have been surmounted. They have given a worth-while book very pleasing form. For the volume *is* worth-while. The quantity is more than one might expect on first view of the size of the book. We have twenty full-length sermons occupying one hundred and eighty-nine pages. But more important than quantity is quality; and in this regard Mr. Cowan's work deserves to rank with that of the very distinguished preachers from whose pens came the former volumes of the Series. As one surveys and recalls that list, one has a comforting feeling that the age of preaching, and great preaching, is not dead. It may be doubted whether the sermonic literature of any forty years excelled what this Series gives as samples of what preaching at its best was like, and is like, during the recent past and the present.

Mr. Cowan's book will be easily 'dated.' No one could fail to see that it is war-time preaching. Many bewildered ministers keep asking 'What shall I preach about in war-time?' This book, and the injunction 'Go thou and do likewise,' is the best possible answer. This is war-time preaching at its best. It is not preaching about the war, its causes, course, or consequences. It is preaching of the eternal verities to people living through a grim struggle. It is a declaration of God's Word to people strained, anxious, and perplexed. There is no doubt about that, nor of the message of comfort conveyed, nor of the efficacy of its presentation. Yet the direct references to the war are singularly few. This is not one of the books which will have no living message once the war is over. If one strikes out a few phrases or sentences, a first-rate sermon for any set of external circumstances will still remain.

Mr. Cowan gets home the truth of Christian doctrine in plain non-technical language. The vocabulary is that of the person of average education. It is coloured by the war. We hear of the air-raid shelter, the gas-mask, the batman, zero hour, the siren, and the like.

He is an adept in the art of illustration. Out of a well-stocked treasury he brings forth things new and old. Sometimes he lays science under contribution. Oftener he reminds one of Dr. W. M. Macgregor in his felicity of literary citation. His range of reading has been wide; and he has filled his own notebooks, for the quotations are unusual and unusually good. Nor does he fail to illustrate from the Scriptures themselves.

Under 'The Christian Year' in this number readers will find the substance of one of the sermons. It is no more than a fair sample of Mr. Cowan's work. One hopes that it will induce many to procure a book so earnest, so stimulating, so full of cheer and hope and faith, so balanced and always so interesting. W. D. NIVEN.

FIELD-MARSHAL SMUTS.

Plans for a Better World. Speeches of Field-Marshal the Right Honourable J. C. Smuts, P.C., C.H., K.C., D.T.D. (Hodder & Stoughton; 8s. 6d. net). The impression left by this book on any sympathetic reader is that of a spacious and powerful mind that lifts every topic it considers above what is merely provincial or limited. The interest of these speeches is various. There is a good deal of science in them, and in this field the author is obviously a master. There is also, of course, a great deal of politics, for Dr. Smuts is one of the really great statesmen of our generation. And there is not a little philosophy, for whatever subject Dr. Smuts discusses he never forgets either the metaphysical or the ethical aspects of it.

Both in the first and in the third of these regions you can see the speaker's mind always working towards the conception which he calls 'Holism,' which is probably his main contribution to the thought of our time. And one is glad to have one speech entirely devoted to this. Dr. Smuts' mind is enthralled by the vision of a great monism, a unity of the universe in which 'things,' qualities, values—life, mind, energy—are all aspects of one grand reality. There is room for physical science, and there is as much room for religion, for values as for events. It is not always easy to follow the exposition, for Dr. Smuts takes too much for granted. Space-time and the Quantum may be child's play to him, but very many of his readers would be glad of a little more light on these great matters. In spite of that, however, few will fail to feel a little of the author's thrill as they catch a little of his vision.

The political speeches are not quite so engrossing, partly because some of them are 'dated.' When he is expounding the virtues of the 'Commonwealth of Nations,' a phrase which he prefers to 'Empire,' he is both enlightened and persuasive. He is not so convincing when he discusses the native problems of South Africa, though we are willing to confess that both his ability and experience give weight to his conclusions. And in regard to the League of Nations he advocates a view which, it seems to me, is demonstrably wrong. But any one may hesitate to differ from so wise and penetrating a guide. And certainly the British peoples and their brothers in all the seas have reason to be grateful to Dr. Smuts for his loyalty, his wide grasp of world problems, and for the clarity and conviction with which he has advocated the cause of freedom. These speeches are a great gift and will serve to reveal to many one of the great men of our time.

F. J. RAE.

The American Methodist Church takes the training of its intending ministers very seriously.

In *The Students' Handbook* (Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, Nashville; $1.50) a course of study is laid out which reflects immense credit on those who conceived it. It includes the Bible, Doctrine, Church History, and Practical Theology. And it is not a mere collection of lectures. The plan is worked out on the basis of certain books which the students have to read. The most careful and detailed guidance is given on the way to study these books, and it may be said, after a survey of the course in all its detail, that the students who undergo this discipline will amply justify the claim of American Methodist ministers to be a learned ministry. This book is no mere pamphlet but a solid volume of 450 pages, with hard study as the burden of every page. It is encouraging to look at the scheme and to think of ministers in any Church doing serious study like this.

In *Pax Christi* (Allen & Unwin; 3s. 6d. net) the Rev. Albert D. Belden, B.D., D.D., propounds a plan for ending war. It is 'to collect the Franchise of the Whole People of Christ for a Universal Christian Ban upon the Act of War.' The capitals are Dr. Belden's. The plan is to be carried out by the signatures of all Christians to a pledge, not necessarily at once to ban war, but to be prepared to act when their Church calls on them to do so. The policy is therefore one of 'Ultimate Pacifism.' Dr. Belden gives a form of pledge and invites all Christians to write to him with their signatures. He expects the signatures to roll in by their ten thousands. He hopes the leaders will be converted to Pacifism, and the churches also, and that they will call on their people to line up on the Pacifist field. The statement of the plan is made and supported in a series of chapters containing very able argument and what may be called a furious Pacifism; and one obvious criticism of the book and its contents is that the plan might appeal with more force if the savage criticism of the churches and the non-Pacifists had been less violent. At the same time credit must be given to the author for his sincerity and passionate conviction as well as for his willingness to accept the co-operation of those who, at any rate now, are not Pacifists.

A very wonderful book about China has been compiled and edited by Yi-Fang Wu and Frank W. Price. It is called *China Rediscovers Her West* (Allen & Unwin; 6s. net). It is a symposium, and Madame Chiang Kai-shek leads off with a chapter on 'The Spirit of New China.' Then we have various contributions from different hands, all about that great West to which government and people have fallen back, a wonderful land graphically described here. The book first of all discusses different aspects of life in this great land, and then deals with the opportunities of Christian service which the present situation presents. It would be difficult to exaggerate the fascination of this small volume, which owes its value to both Chinese and Western writers. One special feature must be mentioned—the little sketches at the head of each chapter, which are very charming. They are done by a Chinese artist.

It is only within recent years that the Hurrians, who occupied the Mesopotamian and neighbouring regions for several centuries at the beginning of the second millennium B.C., have emerged as a vital factor in history. They are known to have had considerable cultural influence on the Israelites long before the latter entered Canaan. Specimens of their language so far known are scanty, being found mainly in a Mitanni letter to the Pharaoh (*c.* 1400 B.C.), and in some texts from Boghazköi, Mâri, and Ras Shamra. This very limited material and its diversified character make a study of the language exceedingly difficult and uncertain. Professor E. A. Speiser, of Pennsylvania University, however, in his *Introduction to Hurrian* (American Schools of Oriental Research, New Haven, Conn.; $2.50), has produced a thoroughly competent and authoritative treatment of the grammar, syntax, and salient points. He regards it as a suffixing language, without gender or similar distinctions, and bearing no direct relationship to Elamite, Hattic, or Caucasic. We commend the volume to all students of the ancient Near Eastern languages, as a valuable advance on the results achieved by Thureau-Dangin, Friedrich, Goetze, and other scholars.

At the Sixth Baptist World Conference, which met in Atlanta in July 1939, a pageant was produced illustrating Baptist history. This has now been published under the title of *Missionaries All: A Pageant of Baptist History*, by Mr. Ernest A. Payne and Mr. K. M. Shuttleworth (Carey Press; 1s. net). It presents about a dozen of the great episodes in the annals of the Baptist Church, introducing among others the famous names of Bunyan, Carey, and Judson. To produce the complete pageant would be rather a formidable undertaking, but the various scenes might well be given separately. They are full of dramatic interest, and the dialogues are well expressed.

Where There's a Will——, by Mrs. Eleanor Macneil Anderson (C.M.S.; 1s. net), is a booklet issued to commemorate the Jubilee of the Medical Mission Auxiliary of the C.M.S. It gives a brief but comprehensive survey of the various fields where medical mission work is done, with some striking examples of the results achieved. It is a plain and unassuming narrative which makes fascinating reading.

In *The Eternal Kingdom* (James Clarke; 5s. net) Professor C. J. Wright of Didsbury and Hartley Victoria Colleges, Manchester, has given us a useful expository and devotional study of the New Testament teaching on the Kingdom of God. He appears to make a point of quoting only well-known lines for illustration. In taking as his title the phrase 'The Eternal Kingdom' he seeks to indicate the view that the Kingdom of which Jesus speaks in the Synoptic Gospels is an

'eternal' Kingdom, while the 'eternal life' of which He speaks in St. John's Gospel is a life *within* the Kingdom of God.

The Faith of Friendship, by the Rev. Lewis Maclachlan, M.A. (Fellowship of Reconciliation; 2s. 6d. net), professes to be a 'simple statement of the Christian faith which arose out of a conversation and subsequent correspondence, and thus takes the form of extracts from letters and replies to them.' The writer's choice of the term 'friendship' to express the Christian idea of the divine love (*agape*) does not tend to enlightenment, and his theology, while full of beautiful thoughts and inspired by a devout spirit, does not go very deep. He writes from the extreme Pacifist position but it cannot be said that he really meets his correspondent's objection, 'So we're all to lie down like doormats and let the oppressors and aggressors wipe their feet on us! That may be very religious, but it's not going to make a better world.'

The twenty-seventh annual Hale Memorial Sermon has been published by the Seabury-Western Theological Seminary, Evanston, Illinois. It was delivered on 14th November, 1941, by the Right Rev. Ronald Owen Hall, Bishop of Hong Kong. Its title is *New Church Order*. The text is, 'Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ' (Gal 6^2). The preacher's aim is to sketch, so far as he can visualize it, the future of the World-Wide Episcopal Church. It is the task of our generation, as he contends, to see that the Episcopal Church heritage is so lifted up and used for God as a living sword 'aflame with faith and free.' He sees both on the Broad Church side and on the Anglo-Catholic side a failure to use to the full what has been inherited; and he makes certain practical proposals which in his opinion will combine loyalty to tradition with proper imagination in its use. Copies of the sermon may be procured at the Seminary Book Shelf, at twenty-five cents each.

The Christian Church and the Soviet State, by Serge Bolshakoff (S.P.C.K.; 3s. 6d. net), is published very appropriately at a time when interest in Russia is at its height. It is a brief account, but it treats its subject in a clear and highly informative way. It is especially useful in giving the most up-to-date information about the attitude of the Soviet authorities to the Church in a situation which is almost daily undergoing change. 'Since 1929 the Church has lost all right to conduct religious propaganda. It is forbidden to open libraries or reading rooms, to organize excursions, children's playgrounds, literary or religious circles, or even groups for Bible study.' Nevertheless Yaroslavsky, the 'Godless' leader, estimated the number of believers in 1937 at about eighty millions. And this is not merely by survival of the older Christian generation but because a younger generation is growing up which has not inherited the hatred of things Christian which animated the first revolutionaries. The Church has survived because 'as the most logical of all atheists, Felix Le Dantec, put it, no man can live by atheism.' The writer gives reason to hope that 'eventually a satisfactory *modus vivendi* between the State and the Church will be reached.'

A Christian Basis for the Post-War World (S.C.M.; 2s. 6d. net) is a commentary on the Ten Peace Points which were contained in the letter to 'The Times,' 21st December, 1940, appearing over the names of the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, the Archbishop of Westminster, and the Moderator of the Free Church Federal Council. In that letter the Five Peace Points of Pope Pius XII. are accepted. The commentary before us is a composite work, edited by Mr. A. E. Baker, in which ten well-known writers, including the present Archbishop of Canterbury, contribute papers on the ten subjects raised by the Ten Peace Points: the Rights of Nations, Disarmament, International Organization, Minorities, the Law of God, Possessions, Education, the Family, Vocation in Work, International Resources. The subjects are all of interest and importance. But this is no systematic work. The writers do not compose a team; each is responsible only for what he (it is sometimes she) has written himself.

The Conquest of Disability, by Mr. J. C. Hardwick (S.C.M.; 2s. net), is a book that will bring sanity and strength to those for whom it is written. They are the sick and disabled, and the counsel of the writer (who is one of them) is meant to help them to conquer their disability. He urges his audience to remember the importance of their mental attitude to their trouble. He urges them to find relief in helping others, to find an occupation, to map out their day, to pray, to meet and conquer nerves. The book is really a treasure of truth and wisdom. It is a beautiful book and will fulfil its mission. Incidentally, it is (as a great preacher once said of another book) 'crawling with sermons.'

Law with Liberty, by the Rev. Geoffrey Allen (S.C.M.; 5s. net), is an interesting discussion of the problems of our time set in the framework of Hegel's dialectic. The writer traces in all the fields which he surveys a movement from thesis through antithesis to synthesis. This may seem to be too doctrinaire, but the ceaseless ebb and flow of human affairs provides many illustrations of the dialectic process, as Hegel himself has shown. In the family there are the stages of parental control, revolts of adolescence, and finally the free fellowship of old and young; in the State tyranny is countered by individual freedom which needs to be tempered by social control; in the Church Catholicism of the authoritarian type is opposed by Protestantism while a synthesis is being sought in œcumenical reunion. Whether this dialectic is an acceptable way of putting things or not, at any rate the writer of this book has much to say on present-day problems which is of real value and to the point.

Reconstruction Problems.

IX. The Church and Re-union.

By Professor John Foster, M.A., Selly Oak Colleges, Birmingham.

Considerable interest has been shown in the suggestion that our Protestant denominations may be compared with the monastic orders of the Church in the Middle Ages.[1] In both cases what we see is somewhat as follows: A minority within the Church is stirred to dissatisfaction with compromised standards, and resolves upon a more thorough-going expression of the faith. It means forsaking the traditional and going apart into something new and separate. As others come to share this protest, or to feel the breath of this revival, a new community appears in the history of the Church. In the pre-Reformation period it is a monastic order. In the modern age, it is one of 'our unhappy divisions.' Since many seem to feel that this is an illuminating comparison, the question arises, Does it throw light, not only on denominational origins, but also on the way forward towards re-union?

Let us look back to the Middle Ages, see what is the condition of the secular Church, and hear what voices of protest are being raised by the monastic movements. These I have briefly set out in the table below:

	The Secular Church.	*Monastic Movements.*
1. Attitude to the World:	World-affirming, (*a*) city: city-centred diocese. (*b*) nation: State connexion (both Roman, and feudal-national; see 4, below). (*c*) world: compromise with the life of the world.	World-denying, (*a*) solitude — desert, or country (emphasis revived by Cistercians). (*b*) independent of local church order and jealous of any local control. (*c*) the setting forth of an absolute standard.
2. Organization:	Bishop and clergy.	Laymen's movements, (lay emphasis is revived in the Franciscans). Monks increasingly take orders owing to demands of (*a*) missionary work; (*b*) popular esteem.
3. The Life of Religion:	Mediated, Grace through the channels of the Church. The Priest. The Mass central in worship. Celibacy of the secular clergy in the West.	Direct, Holiness to be reached through separation from evil world. The mystic's direct approach. Worship at the Canonical Hours almost wholly Scriptural—the Psalter. Masses in monastic worship.
4. Connexion with the State:	Feudal-national connexion. Cluniac reforms of (*a*) society—'The Truce of God.' (*b*) the Church, especially in the Hildebrandine period of the Papacy.	Opposition to any State control, especially from Cluny (909) on. Direct link with the Pope. The supra-national Church ideal.

First we may observe, if it needs observation, that the secular Church is secular. (*a*) The city. It is an urban Christianity. From the first centuries the bishop's see has been the city; with the evolution of the diocese, he remains city-centred. It is thus that *paganus* (rustic) comes to mean the kind of man who is untouched by the Church. (*b*) The nation. From the fourth century onwards the Church of the Roman Empire is vastly influenced by its State connexion. When the Roman Empire falls into decay, the Church remains. It meets the new nations, as they are painfully evolved in the feudalism of the Dark Ages, with

[1] *Then and Now*, 45, 146, 158. The thesis is not new. It was worked out, perhaps over-worked, by A. V. G. Allen in his *Christian Institutions* (1898).

the claim to be as central in the life of each new society as it was in that of the old. (*c*) The world. From the time of Constantine that conception of the Church which has prevailed is the Church *in* the world, influencing its life, demanding its allegiance. As the new nations of Europe are converted, the centrality of the Church is even enhanced. The Church alone continues to speak the language of the world-order which has gone—Latin. It retains much of Roman traditions, its Canon Law. It is ruled from the ancient capital, Rome. The Church of the West continues Roman when nothing else does. Yet its being 'in the world' inevitably means that Christian discipline, which could be enforced for the few, has had to be slackened for the many. Christian standards, which seem impossible of immediate attainment, have been compromised. Since, in spite of the Church's triumph, the millennium has not come, the Church must in many spheres of life be content to wait.

The position of the monk in these three respects is exactly opposite. (*a*) His life is not city-centred. After speaking bitterly of his brief experience as Bishop of Constantinople—the 'exquisite character of our table, the splendour of our apparel, the officers who precede us, our haughtiness to those who meet us . . . splendid horses . . . magnificent carriages, preceded by a procession and surrounded by applause'—Gregory of Nazianzus [1] sums up his decision to retire from it all in these words:

> 'Elect another who will please the majority; and give me my *desert, my country life, and my God*, whom alone I may have to please, and whom I will please by my simple life.'

He is returning to Nazianzus and resuming the semi-monastic life to which he gave himself in youth. The monk fled from the city to the solitude. When, because of his industry, the desert—or more properly the wild or the fen—began to rejoice and blossom as the rose, the population often followed him. Then came a new monastic movement, the Cistercian (1098), which bade him flee again, and flee farther, from town to country. (*b*) It is the monk, who in the period of the Church's triumph, protests against the growing worldliness of the State-Church. In later periods it is likewise he who stands against the tendencies of the secular clergy to be caught up into the structure of local society. These tendencies increase with the wealth of the Church, not only because of the spirit of worldliness, but because wealth means land, and in a feudal society land-tenure is the basis of all relations. (*c*) The above (*a* and *b*) are illustrations, in two departments of life, of the monk's attitude to life as a whole. He did not belong to this world, and if he did the world service it was without any such conscious motive. He knew that his position was possible only for a minority, that life itself would come to an end if all men went his way. Indeed in the matter of absolute standards, monk and secular then were in a relation similar to that of the Christian Pacificist and the rest of us Christians in these days of world war. He was intent, not upon the amount of Christianity which it was possible to express in a given state of society, but with the immediate and final demand of One who seemed to say, 'If thou wouldest be perfect . . .' And still it meant renunciation of property, leaving of home; indeed it meant counting the world well lost for hope of heaven.

In the second section of the table, note the difference in organization. In the traditional Church the cleric is central. In this other expression of Christianity, the layman's is the primary part. St. Basil writes (*c.* 372) of 'the solitaries in the desert where there is no priest.' [2] St. Jerome reluctantly accepts priest's orders at the age of thirty-four (379). He has already been a protagonist of the monk's high calling for nearly ten years. He says that he

> 'told Bishop Paulinus of blessed memory, "Did I ask to be ordained by you? If in bestowing the rank of presbyter you do not strip us of the monastic state, you can bestow or withhold ordination as you think best. But if your intention in giving the name of presbyter was to take from me that for which I forsook the world, I must still claim to be what I always was."' [3]

The first monks are all, or almost all, laymen. This situation slowly changes. By the tenth century, monks who take orders are still a minority, but a growing minority. The reason is that the Benedictines, like men of later revivals—Franciscans in the thirteenth century, Jesuits in the sixteenth, and Evangelicals in the nineteenth—express their new-found zeal in missionary work. Once beyond the bounds of Christendom, they find that there is no traditional Church to offset their own distinctive witness. The monk must himself undertake the duties of the parish priest. Even within Christendom something similar happens. The monk, being the product of a revival, is seen to be the most vital of religion's representatives. People demand that from his hands they shall be able to receive all the Church's ministrations. In the thirteenth century, St. Francis revives this original lay emphasis in the monastic movement. He tells us in his Will,[4]

[1] This belongs to the year 381; *Orations*, xlii, 24.

[2] *Letters*, 93.

[3] *To Pammachius against John of Jerusalem*, 41.

[4] To be found, *e.g.*, in P. Sabatier, *Life of St. Francis of Assisi*, 337–339.

'the clerks said the office like other clerks, and the laymen *Pater Noster*.' Then he proceeds, 'I worked with my hands and would continue to do, and I will also that all other friars work at some honorable trade.' Clearly he takes for granted what we know to have been the fact: the majority of those who work with the peasants in the fields, with small craftsmen in the industries of the home, sharing their plain food and poor lodging, or 'resorting to the Table of the Lord, begging their bread from door to door,'—these are not clerics. It is the life and witness of laymen, at one with their fellow-peasants, not the ministrations of those who have been separated for the priesthood of the Church.

The third note is a corollary of the second. If the monks begin as laymen, their worship is the worship of laymen. K. E. Kirk marks a 'perverse outlook of primitive monachism . . . in connexion with the Eucharist,' a spirit which 'survived even into the days of monastic organization.'[1] But surely neglect of sacramental grace is not to be wondered at in a movement which begins by being so radical a departure from traditional ways. Baptism in infancy, life unfolding within the family of the Church, growing up into the Church's discipline, fed by the means of grace, this is the tradition. But the solitary who goes off to the desert is a man of crisis, call, conversion. Like Bunyan's Pilgrim he flees from the City of Destruction, knowing that, whatever else he must do to be saved, the first thing is flight from all association with an evil world. For long there remains about monks, as if to mark them as true successors to the solitary, this distinctive concern. Indeed loss of it may be said to mark the decline of true monastic spirit. In St. Benedict's time (527 is the date of his Rule), Mass is said in monasteries only on Sundays and festivals—perhaps an average of twice a week through the year. By the time we reach the tenth century it has become the central service of every day. This is best understood as an invasion of influences from the secular Church, contemporary with, and connected with, the increase in the number of monks taking orders. Similarly the growing demand in the West at this very time, that the clergy should be celibate, is a counter-influence making in the other direction. Monasticism, which began as a reaction from the ordinary life of the Church, is flowing over the barrier which separates monastic and secular morality; the monk's ideal of holiness as being separation from an evil world thus becomes central in the secular Church. As if in compensation, the Church's mediation of grace, the office of the priest, the sacrifice of the Mass, become central in monastic, as in secular worship. But distinctive monastic worship remains. It is to be found in the services of the Breviary. The worship at the eight canonical hours, an endless chain of worship running through day and night, and reaching right across the world,[2] uses the whole of the Psalter every week. It is the most thoroughly *scriptural* worship which has ever been offered to Almighty God.[3]

The fourth section of the table, Connexion with the State, is one of the most important. The period of the rise of Monasticism is also the period of the Church's alliance with the Roman State. That is the background against which to understand its most significant protest. Similarly, great monastic revivals at the end of the Dark Ages come at a time when the feudal-national systems of the New Europe are nearing completion. Society is based upon land. Church lands—sometimes half a kingdom—are fiefs too, and among the most important. How can their holders fail to be counted among the vassals of the king? The Church is in danger of becoming little more than one element within the feudal-national system. The way in which the monk raises his voice against this absorption is historically one of his most valuable protests.

Of these monks the best known are the men of Cluny (909). They first secure the principle of their own freedom from local jurisdiction. They place themselves, under their Abbot, in direct connexion with the Pope. They, and others like them, go on, in their influence upon reforming Popes, especially the great Hildebrand, to demand the lifting of the whole Church out of the sphere of feudal conflicts, the setting of the Church above the world and its welter of evil, the supra-national Church ideal. They have travelled far from original monasticism and its otherworldliness. This is the loftiest conception of the Church in relation to the world order, and the most daring attempt to realize it, in the whole of the Middle Ages.

In presenting a thesis one must be careful not to overstate, nor to over-prove. There is no greater discredit than to appear to mutilate one's facts in order to make them fit one's theories. For that reason I am almost embarrassed, on turning from the medieval monk to the modern Protestant, to find how much they have in common! In describing the more thorough-going Protestant, no one could omit the following four points, so nearly corresponding with the four set out above:

1. *The sect-ideal of the Church.* The Church is

[1] *The Vision of God*, 191 f.

[2] The canonical hours (seven, as originally in the West) are mentioned as being kept by monks in China in the eighth century. See my *Church of the T'ang Dynasty*, 85, 137.

[3] *Then and Now*, 55.

the community of those who are saved out of the world. One cannot here, as with the monk, note a flight from city to country. Protestantism was far from being rural; the rustic was conservative, and the ultra-revolutionary was to be found chiefly in the towns. But the illustration which I chose from Gregory of Nazianzus (and, believe me, I did it with no intention to trim my material ready for this comparison!) might have been one of our sixteenth or seventeenth-century Separatists protesting against the proud prelate and all his pomp and display. A town scene it is; this is how Samuel Butler in his 'ruthless rhymes' describes it:

> The oyster women locked their fish up,
> And trudged away to cry 'No bishop'![1]

It is the long familiar protest against the grandee bishop, so far removed from the simplicities of Christ and His poor.

Objection to control by the nation we shall review below.

In attitude to the world, the Puritan differed from the monk chiefly in the fact that the rigours of his flight from the world he wished to apply to the whole Christian community:

> 'There is no medium between these two extremes, either the earth must become vile in our estimation, or it must retain our immoderate love. . . . . If heaven is our country, what is the earth but a place of exile? If the departure out of the world is an entrance to life, what is the world but a sepulchre?'[2]

No wonder that Calvin has been called 'medieval monk in the guise of the evangelical Reformer.' The writer goes on to mark the difference that 'while the choice of the monastic profession was voluntary, his puritanism is obligatory on all as an essential of the Christian life.'[3]

2. *Rediscovery of the layman's part.* One of the resounding phrases of the Reformation, heard first from the lips of Martin Luther himself, is 'the priesthood of all believers.' Its most extreme outworking is to be found in those later sects recognizing no separate ministry, of which in this country the Quakers are the most considerable representatives. Perhaps it is in Geneva that the idea is worked out in best proportion. Indeed many feel that here, in its sound discipline of the life of the ordinary layman, is the outstanding contribution of Presbyterianism to a re-united Church.[4]

If in the later Middle Ages this emphasis was revived by the Franciscans, in later Protestant history the Methodists bring the layman to a share in both preaching and pastoral offices.[5] Here we may well recall what was previously said about monks taking orders. It was for entirely similar reasons, missionary work in the American colonies, that Wesley needed some of his lay preachers ordained. After twice failing to secure regular ordination for them, he ordained them himself in 1784. Again, in the home country the Methodist Societies, originally thought of as an 'order' within the Church of England, increasingly gave honour to their own preachers; this led to the demand—so contrary to Wesley's first design—that they should administer their own Sacraments. Here the parallel breaks down. With the monk ordination meant that he, who once had parted from tradition, was beginning to conform. The answering of these same demands by the Methodist meant that Methodism broke with traditional Church order. The fundamental difference is here: In the medieval Church, by a remarkable synthesis, two expressions of Christianity, which might have been contradictory, were shown forth as complementary. They were included, though only with an effort, within one Church. They were free to act and react, and so to enrich each other. In post-Reformation England there were similarly two expressions of Christianity: that which preserved the traditional Church order, and minority groups which embodied revival movements. No synthesis was made. Influence and counter-influence there were, but because of the failure to achieve a comprehensive Church system, the expression of such influences came to be 'irregular.'[6]

3. *Emphasis on aspects of religion other than the sacramental.* This feature of Protestantism too can be seen in the radical minorities where sacramental religion has ceased to be, or more moderately represented in those churches which speak of 'the ministry of the Word and of the Sacraments' with first emphasis upon the Word. Their aim is a scriptural worship. The psalm-singing Presbyterian is again not far from the monk. Other Protestants, with a less specialized hymnology, join them in giving central place to

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[1] *Hudibras.*
[2] John Calvin, *Institutes*, iii. 9.
[3] James Mackinnon, *Calvin and the Reformation.*
[4] Cf. article by A. M. Fairbairn in *Cambridge Modern History*, ii. 364:

> 'How could the Church be made not simply an institution for the worship of God, but an agency for the making of men fit to worship Him? His (Calvin's) attempt to solve this problem constitutes his chief title to a place in the history of religion. . . . We have less cause to be grateful to him for the system called Calvinism than for the Church that he organized.'

[5] "Local preachers' and 'class leaders.'
[6] Influence, the other way, causing irregularities within the traditional order, may be seen, *e.g.*, in Charles Smyth, *Simeon and Church Order*, especially ch. 6.

expository preaching. This means (or should mean) the centrality of Scripture. Again, like the first monks, they see the religious life as marked by crisis. Nurture within the sphere of the Church's sacraments is not enough. There must be conversion and a new beginning. Looking back I see that, describing the monks' flight from an evil world, I said (again without design) 'like Bunyan's Pilgrim.' It shows how real is the relationship between monk and Protestant. Bunyan is a Baptist, one of those who stood most resolutely for this emphasis upon the crisis of individual decision.

4. *Protest against tendencies to regard the Church as the religious aspect of the Nation.* This is a main motive, not with all Protestants, but with the more radical. We expressed surprise that movements which began by being narrowly monastic should in the Middle Ages have resulted in the Hildebrandine struggle for the supra-national Church ideal. Something similar happens with those Independents who begin with the watchwords, 'gathered Church,' and 'the worthiest be they never so few.' They may seem to limit the Church for ever to be a minority movement, out of which nothing great could emerge. But we recall that in England theirs is the first protest against that low conception of the Church which, in breaking the link with Rome, has made it little more than a department of the State. The Congregationalist, whatever your ideas about him, or whatever his ideas about himself, *is* a man who stands for a higher churchmanship. His place may be among the ultra-Protestants; but he has this in common with the Anglo-Catholics. And he stood for it when no one else was ready to brave all and to forsake all to stand with him.[1]

If this parallel is accepted, what follows with regard to 'our unhappy divisions'? I hope that this consideration of the background of history may prove to have been worth-while, in helping us to view one another more dispassionately, and to come to certain conclusions about our relative positions. Anglican and Free-Churchman are often annoying to each other because with each is a certain assumption of superiority. When the Anglican talks about the Church, the non-Anglican glances suspiciously to see if he is unchurching him. He knows that the Church of England no longer regards itself as, in England, the sole channel of God's grace. But it does assume an *ecclesiastical* superiority, as representing the main stream of Christian tradition. The non-Anglican, on the other hand, in discarding the negative and dependent term, 'Non-conformist,' has taken to himself the name 'Free Church.' A sensitive Anglican may be forgiven for shrinking before the veiled charge of Erastianism against the Establishment. These denominations are, by the circumstances of their origin, in a position of assumed *moral or spiritual* superiority with regard to abuses which existed in the national Church.

These assumptions of superiority, which have been and still are the cause of our mistrust, I hope we may now see, against the background of history, to mark the way to real mutual understanding. The fact is, both sides are right. Once again we may quote what the Duchess said to Alice, 'Everyone has won, and all shall have prizes.'[2]

We Free-Churchmen must be ready to recognize in the Church of England the continuation of the secular Church. It is—there is no doubt about it—for this country the main stream. Our own origins were from within it. Our communities, thrown up as the result of revivals, if the example of the Middle Ages had been followed, for all our distinctiveness, would not have been allowed to become detached. The task of re-union is to put that right.

Just as surely, the Anglican must be ready to recognize that these are revival movements; that they stand as protests against abuses to which the secular Church has always been prone; that, while remaining separated from them, the secular Church is, in some measure, in danger still. Re-union therefore is not mere re-absorption of minorities once guilty of the sin of schism; rather it is acceptance of long-needed correctives, bringing health and healing to the life of the whole Body. Each needs the other.

I hope that pondering the parallel many other questions, sometimes the answers too, will rise in readers' minds. Those ungracious words of St. Jerome, about his ordination, for example, might they not—though none of us would wish to growl so savagely as he—represent a possible attitude to episcopal ordination from one who hitherto has been a die-hard on the other side? Does not the parallel suggest how unhappy divisions might be transformed to happy diversity within one Church order, our distinctive worships and works remaining—even distinctions of belief so long as the essentials of the historic faith are held in common? Does it not suggest how diversity within unity would work for our mutual enrichment?

The secular Church might not have survived the Dark Ages but for the co-existence of the monastic orders. The monks would have been

[1] This view of Congregationalism is well presented by Nathaniel Micklem, *The Church Catholic*.

[2] Quoted by B. H. Streeter, *Primitive Church*, 9, in discussing another section of this same subject.

lost to the need of the world, or at any rate to its greater part, but for the mediation of their influences through the secular Church. Neither expression of Christianity was self-contained. Each needed the other. With us too, whether recognized or still unseen, it has always been so. Re-union must not be thought of as a reaching forward to something entirely unknown, nor as a restoring of something wholly lost. We seek a more worthy visible expression of the Church behind the churches, the Church to which, not of our deserving but in God's mercy, we already belong. In thinking of this worthier expression we ought not to forget that the Dark Ages are here again, and that the cry of the world's need was never more desperate than in this our day.

In the Study.

Virginibus Puerisque.

The Friend who Backs Us Up.

By the Reverend Stuart Robertson, M.A., Lisbon.

'The Lord stood with me.'—2 Ti 4[17].

Once a Salvation Army lassie stood at the bar of a Manchester Police Court. It was in the early days of the Salvation Army, when respectable people were suspicious of it, and roughs ill-treated it, and 'superior' folk sneered at it. She had been arrested for 'obstructing the traffic' in Deansgate, and she looked, and felt, very forlorn and alone as she stood there before the magistrates.

But as soon as the charge was read, Frank Crosby, one of the magistrates, left his seat on the Bench, came down, and stood beside her. His action meant that he was going to share her lot; and support her by his presence, and that whatever shame might be hers should be his also. He 'stood with her.'

It was just such an experience as this that made St. Paul write to Timothy 'The Lord stood with me.' He too was a prisoner, brought before Nero, and to be accused before that monster meant usually death. No one was with him. 'No man stood with me,' he says, 'but all men forsook me.' It would have been a fine thing to read that some of these Roman Christians were brave enough to stand with St. Paul before Nero; but it was a fearful thing to face that mad and cruel emperor, and it was too much for St. Paul's friends. He was too big a man to blame them, but he must have missed them, and he must have felt terribly alone.

Suddenly he felt that he was not alone. He was conscious of a Presence with him pouring courage into his heart and peace into his soul. He knew that it could only be one Person: the same who had said to the disciples, 'Lo, I am with you alway.' So he wrote to Timothy, simply, as people write when they are writing the truth, 'The Lord stood with me.'

That is the only thing he has told about that day when he stood before Nero. He might have told us what Nero looked like, and what he said. He might have told us something about the men who stood round Nero's throne. He might have told us about the splendours of Nero's Golden House. He told us nothing of these things. But what he did tell is, after all, the thing most of all worth telling. Nero is dead and gone, his Golden House is dust, and all his splendour and power vanished; but this lives for ever and will never be forgotten; it will be read in Christian churches to the end of time—'the Lord stood with me.' The sense of that made everything else fade into insignificance in St. Paul's eyes. The things that had daunted him shrank out of sight. The desertion of his friends ceased to pain him. One thing only mattered—that the Lord Jesus was standing with him. That was real; all the rest were shadows.

That was what the disciples found in Jesus—a friend who stood by them. He stood by them in the storm on the lake. He stood by them in the Garden of Gethsemane. He stood by Mary Magdalene when Simon the Pharisee sneered at her. He stood by Mary at Bethany when the disciples found fault with her. He stood by Peter when he was downcast and sorry and ashamed. He said to the disciples in the Upper Room that He would come back to them, a Spirit of comfort to strengthen and encourage, and His last words in the Gospels were 'Lo, I am with you alway, to the end of the world.'

No one can do very much if he isn't backed up. You learn that in games. How maddening it is to see a brilliant single-handed effort in hockey or football come to nothing because no one has backed it, and been up to take the pass that would have crowned it with a score.

How tragic it has been to read of the brave men, Dutch and British, fighting gallantly in the Far East against fearful odds, and forced to retreat, and retreat, for lack of the reinforcements which would have turned defeat into victory. Alas! there wasn't the time, and there weren't the men to back them up.

Life tells us the same story, both in its victories and in its defeats. Any one who has done anything fine owes much of it to loyal hearts who stood with him, backing him with their belief in him, their presence, and their prayers.

I hope you will always have true friends to believe in you and back you in every good endeavour. But even if you should some day have

to say, like St. Paul, 'no man stood with me,' yet you will still be able to say, like him, 'Nevertheless, the Lord stood with me.' For the Lord Jesus has promised to do just that thing, and His promises are never broken. Be sure of that, for nothing is more certain. The thought of the Christ who stands by us unseen will give you strength whenever you are hesitating in the face of duty, and you too will be able to write in the book of your life, 'The Lord stood with me.'

The Man who had to stay at Home.

By the Reverend J. C. Culbert, B.A., LL.B., Ballycastle.

'As his part is that goeth down to the battle, so shall his part be that tarrieth by the stuff: they shall part alike.'—1 S 30^{24}.

Israel was at war, and King David issued a proclamation to say that those who were busy with necessary duties at home should share the rewards and honours when victory came equally with those who went out to the battle. Not all can be in the front line of the exciting endeavour—some must stay at humdrum tasks and dull routine—but their service is all-important too, and they too shall have recognition from the King of Kings.

Russia's valour in the field has won our gratitude and admiration. But before the war that country was already proving her prowess in other spheres. A few years ago she organized a scientific research expedition to the North Pole. The members made a long sojourn in the bleak wastes there and made many useful discoveries. The party went by aeroplane. Space was limited and ample supplies of food had to be taken. Everything was put into as small bulk as possible in 'food concentrates.' It is said that 50 carcases of beef, 5500 chickens and 3 tons of vegetables were compressed into a weight of 1 ton.

There were hardships amid the polar ice, and reminders too of home, as when one day the explorers heard a familiar chirping and spied a little sparrow, or when pulling up a cable through the floes brought with it from the sea below a tiny crab. The expedition was a success. Much valuable information was acquired, and the leader praised highly the food concentrates, for the health of the party had depended on the carefully prepared provisions.

Now, away back in one of the community kitchens in Moscow a cook read the daily bulletins about the expedition, giving the tidings that came by wireless, and he sighed. Alas! there was no adventure for him, no heroic deeds, no plaudits, but just the same old hot round of cooking! Then came the May Day rejoicings, and he and hosts of others were listening in to the finished story of the expedition and to the honours list. Suddenly the cook started and changed colour. His name was amongst those responsible for the success of the Arctic expedition. He had almost forgotten it—but he had helped to prepare those food concentrates, those rations in small bulk that had furnished health and energy to the men away on the ice.

I wonder do any of us ever feel out of it like that cook? Do we envy those who are God's adventurers in the ends of the earth, the missionaries in heathen lands, and imagine that those at home don't count? A poster on our hoardings says 'Your courage, your resolution, your self-denial are necessary to bring us victory,' and any child reading that can say, that means me. It is the same in the fight between good and evil. Christ can use all, and the prayers, work, and gifts of those at home help to bring about the triumphs of the brave missionaries far away.

The Christian Year.

Sixth Sunday after Trinity.

Jesus' Warrant for an Avenging God.

'And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily.'—Lk $18^{7.8}$.

Our Lord lent His authority to the conception of an avenging God. The word 'avenge' is a startling word to fall from the lips of the Master of love, and it cannot imply anything so lurid as an offended Deity hurling thunderbolts at iniquity. What Jesus warrants is that God will give the best its due. So His pronouncement on the avenging God is comforting, and is a welcome message for such a desperate crisis as this.

The story here might have been told about a Jewish woman, or a Polish woman, who had been defrauded in German-occupied territory to-day. What chance would she have of getting fair play in a law court? She had been exploited by some rascal as fair game, but the judicial system was so corrupt and obstinate that she was balked of legitimate redress. It shocks our sense of ordinary decency, and we think it is a black shame. So did our Lord, when He gave His warrant for an avenging God. Jesus put it beyond question that God would do justice to His servants and to His cause, and prove faithful to all believing hearts.

But on one condition. Their faith must be a shock-absorber, which can swallow misfortune and distress, and still go strong. It must persist and last. Their prayer must be importunate, and show tenacity of purpose, because there is a Divine Vindicator of those who hold on and keep committing themselves to Him.

1. *People may be Stupefied or Stimulated by Delay.* That is the snag, 'though he bear long with them.' However the words are interpreted, they imply some delay, real or apparent. There is a general impression that God bears long, too long many think, and it is a strain on faith. 'Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.'

If Divine justice seems to linger on the road, it is only until believing hearts have been fitted for a long-term fidelity, prepared for the future,

qualified to benefit by its opportunities and inspirations and to meet its demands. The retribution which seems too leisurely in a world stampeding to ruin is part of a Divine purpose, which is working at high pressure to awaken and train conscience and produce certain moral results. Carlyle said, 'God is not a mill but a miller,' not a system of law revolving like a mill-wheel, but a directing mind and a personal touch which impress, educate, and shape the spirit. That is why prayer must persist and grow in the understanding of God's purpose and in co-operation with it.

There is no doubt that this woman was illuminated and energized by the protracted conflict. Perhaps she needed this trouble to develop her nature, and she came to her full flower by sustained resistance to a grievous wrong. But this ennobling effect of distress is God's doing. It was He who drew her out to the utmost stretch of her powers by convincing her that injustice had no right to exist and therefore must fall. So the splendid spirit evoked in her does not excuse the oppressor or exculpate the unjust judge. It would be quite in character for him to boast afterwards that he had given this widow a chance to prove her mettle and started her on a career of self-fulfilment.

If some are stupefied by the postponement of the reckoning with evil, some are stimulated, like this widow. But the delay is more apparent than real. When we are living through many emotions of anxiety, grief, and horror, we feel as if the time would never pass, and it seems an age to us. It appears an interminable period. Our Lord corrects our misreading of the clock when He says, 'I tell you that he will avenge them speedily.' It may look as if the avenging purpose of God was in a state of suspended animation, when it is really proceeding with the utmost dispatch to shake us out of our spiritual lethargy.

2. *The Indomitable Petitioner, not the Unjust Judge, was the Final Success.* The unjust judge terrorized the neighbourhood by his flair for browbeating and silencing people. He thought he could gag every protesting mouth and cow every mutinous spirit. R. L. Stevenson tells how the wife of Weir of Hermiston, who was a coarse, domineering judge, lost heart and became faded and crushed in her prime. She was a contrast to the widow of our story. The unjust judge supposed he could intimidate every one in the town, but there was one woman who stood up to him and refused to be fobbed off or driven away. She returned to the court-room again and again to plead her case, getting to the heart of it, revising its presentation as she saw deeper into it, grasping all its implications and consequences. She had gone over it so often that she had all the points at her finger-tips.

Prayer must be like that, and keep probing the issue at stake, till it gets down to what is fundamentally wrong and what is conclusively right. It must penetrate to the vital core of the matter and discern the sufficient remedy. It is a purposeful attitude, which takes time. A facile prayer now and then will not resolve the difficulty. There must be diligent, persevering prayer, if the avenging purpose of God is to arrive, and why? The widow had to persist to coerce a reluctant scoundrel, and pester him into compliance. But the Divine character is the grand antithesis to that obdurate injustice. God receives our petitions with a hospitable mind, a generous heart, and an open hand which is eager to relieve the needs of faith. Surely then it would be irreverent to imagine that we must convince and compel such a God to pay attention to our wants. Quite so! But we must convince and compel ourselves to see the total import of our petition for victory. Why do we wish to overcome? Are we sufficiently aware that this is not merely a war for political and economic ends but for spiritual issues? The enemy employs psychology to pervert thinking and feeling. He has planned his invasion of our spirit with intellectual subtlety, and we cannot defeat it with a jumble of humane intentions. What is urgent is that we should open our minds and hearts unceasingly to suggestion and stimulation from God. That is how persevering prayer trains our perceptions and enables us to enter into His mind and share His thoughts as to the ultimate values. The importunate widow was the avenging God taking His first step, making His first move to right the wrong, because she took pains to appreciate all that was involved in her case. Persistent prayer clarifies our mind and keeps it sensitive to the Holy Spirit, when an *un*holy spirit is assailing us in this war. Maritain speaks of 'the barbarians who hail the effulgence of incendiary bombs as a supreme artistic festival.' And why do they exult in their inhuman bombing of cities? Because it is symbolic of a plot to shatter and burn the higher self in us, to explode sacred obligations, to strip us of our humanity and reduce us to the level of cave-dwellers and beasts. It is a demonic attempt to destroy not merely our body but our soul. How can we hope to conquer this attempted degradation of us, unless we mobilize all our spiritual forces in a determined alignment with God's purpose? We need a clearer vision, a more persistent and passionate devotion to the God revealed in Jesus Christ. We must have all the points of the case at our finger-tips like the woman in our story, and that is achieved only by untiring resort to God.

3. *The Avenging Purpose of God has an Evangelizing Appeal.* The avenging purpose of God means that He will do justice to the situation, not to partisan views of the situation, nor to the distorted opinions and wounded feelings of belligerents. It is persevering prayer that takes the blinkers from our mind and qualifies us to appreciate and accept this as the saving wisdom of God. For what is the principle on which He acts? It is to 'avenge his own elect,' to confirm faith, to justify believing hearts, and to deliver the Christian cause from the threat of extinction.

Hitler said to Mussolini, 'Christianity is the Bolshevism of antiquity,' as if it were an obsolete reversal of values by the proletariat, an incubus

on progress. God can be depended upon to refute that, because the advance of Christianity is His primary concern. He is supremely interested in the higher development of mankind and the ascendancy of spiritual values. What Jesus Christ warrants is that the avenging purpose of God is bent on exalting the way of salvation in the minds of men, enforcing its appeal, and making it more inescapable and irresistible. Middleton Murry says: 'The world struggles ignorantly and desperately towards Christ. This is to me the meaning of history.' The avenging purpose of God does justice to the situation by its evangelizing effect, which turns public attention to Christian values as the only inviting prospect of recovery and advance. 'Shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily.' [1]

SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Compassion.

BY THE REVEREND JOHN L. KENT, M.A., CATHCART, GLASGOW.

'A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench.'—Is 42^3.

Some men have their biographies written after they are dead. A few have their story told and their praises sung while they are alive. Only one had His virtues extolled before He was born.

Here, in these prophecies of Isaiah, hundreds of years before He came into the world, the essential nature of the Lord Jesus Christ is depicted and His redemptive mission described. For men may differ concerning the identity of the Servant of the Lord but in one judgment they are unanimous. The portrait of the Servant is a singularly accurate prediction of the character of Jesus Christ. His outward appearance, the tone of His voice, His dignified bearing, the utter self-effacement of His service, His sensitive relationship with men and the mystery of His deep fellowship with God—all are set forth so vividly that the stature and spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ are seen and felt long before He steps on to the stage of this physical world.

But more than that. This bold, prophetic writer focuses on the central feature of His character. He sets the predominant attribute of His life clearly in the light. 'The towering quality of His soul,' he declares, 'is not the exciting valour of old-world heroes or the liberating zeal of gallant crusaders but compassion, infinite tenderness, capacious sympathy.' 'A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench.'

So far-seeing, indeed, is this ancient prophet of God that he takes this master virtue of the Servant and puts it at the heart of religion and life. 'Look at the throne of the world,' he says. 'See! It is not a relentless despot who sits there, ruling his kingdom with merciless justice. Not imperial majesty issuing inexorable decrees till the very echoes of his voice fill the earth with dread. God who reigns on high has a heart of compassion. Loud, strident notes are absent from His commands. He rules, but with inexhaustible patience. He enforces His laws but never tramples down the broken and weak. Look at the Servant! He has God's spirit. A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench.'

It is good in days like these that we should remind ourselves of this Bible affirmation. It is the heart of our religion and the truth about the government of the world. When men are hearing the hurrying march of the forces of judgment and are everywhere crying doom, we ought to hold steadily before our eyes this central word of our faith. The King and Judge of all the earth, revealed in the life and death of the Lord Jesus Christ, is the God of compassion.

Characteristic of Man.—Man is bruised. The wick in his lamp has a feeble flame. Never have we been so sure of this fact. The circumstances of our present day have wounded man. A ploughshare has been driven into the tender soil of his most intimate feelings and left him sore wounded. Separations, anxieties and bereavements; reversals of fortune, uncertainties of the future, complete changes in modes of living; these and a multitude more of the stabbing experiences of our day have left a red scar on our life. Man is bruised.

The hurt goes very deep. For man had been hoping for better things. He thought the world had reached its maturity and had left far behind the disordered passions and brutalities of primitive times. Man had grown up and mastered the art of living and of controlling the world. There lay before him the enchanting prospect of an ample life of peace and power. Now into these hopes have crashed disaster and disillusionment, sudden and ruthless. He can hardly believe it. He often stands and rubs his eyes to make quite sure he is not shuddering before the horror of a nightmare. But it is true. The wild beast has escaped and is tearing our life in blind rage. It is not merely that the structure of our society so carefully erected with effort and tears is being shattered; nor is it that the sanctities of heart and home are being ravaged: it is that the thing should happen at all. What a reeling blow to faith! How devastating to our quite legitimate hopes! Man is bruised.

So deep is the hurt that man feels permanently crippled and enfeebled. His condition is chronic. That is the only conclusion to which the grim facts point. Dire tragedy has come because man is and has always been in a sad, pitiable state. His moral nature bears a corrupting and incurable sore. Errors he cannot avoid, blunders he cannot repair, sins he cannot escape have either ruined or threatened to bring to nought his loftiest endeavours. He is a noble creature but, like a majestic stag trailing a shattered limb, he suffers constant frustration because he carries with him a wound that nothing can heal. Man is bruised.

Characteristic of God.—If this is the truth about man—not one man here and there, not this race of men or that nation, but all races and nations and every man—then what is God's attitude? Is He inaccessible, remote, keeping His incommunicable

[1] A. A. Cowan, *Crisis on the Frontier*, 22.

sleep? Is He unaffected by man's pathetic plight, turning a deaf ear to his piteous entreaty? Is He imperious and callous, crushing down the broken reed and snuffing the flickering wick between cold fingers?

To this question Isaiah and the Gospel give a clear, resounding answer. 'A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench.' The God who made us, fashioning us in form and faculty, who breathed into us His own life so that we became living souls, who presided over the destinies of men and nations and brought us to the present day, is not a God of indifference spurning us in the hour of our extremity but of infinite tenderness and sympathy. The sight of the bleeding heart moves Him. The cry of the wounded soul brings Him hastening on the wings of light to succour it. He is the God of compassion.

That is the central assertion of our religion. Without it the Gospel would lose its meaning and power. The truth and value of the Christian Gospel are proved by the extent to which it has introduced men to a world where their hurts are healed and their personalities succoured and harmonized. This is the specific sphere of religion. Every religion that has ever gripped men has brought them in some measure this light and healing. But the Christian religion stands as the unique revelation of God because through it God does what man can never do for himself—binds up his wounds and rekindles the life of his soul.

This is God's characteristic activity because it is His nature. In Christ, He comes to men suffering the ache and pang of separation, anxiety and bereavement and makes real His compassion. He carries them into a world where each individual matters supremely to His eternal love. There in that world, and there alone, can they be sure that neither life nor death, nor things present nor things to come, nor anything else in creation can separate them from that love. Pain, fear, as well as death, are swallowed up in victory. In Christ, He comes to men aghast at the effrontery of sin or writhing in the grasp of tormenting conscience and makes His compassion real. He takes them where the power and guilt of sin have been broken through His forgiveness. There in that world, and again there alone, men are made certain that the God who deals so compassionately with their sins and the sins of their brethren is He who can be trusted until every foe is vanquished and every hurt is healed.

Characteristic of the Godly Man.—Bruised men who experience the succour and healing of God's compassion can never be the same again. Something has happened to them that makes them different from their fellow-men. By it they can be singled out from the vast multitude. Having received the compassion of God, a new compassion is born in them. Compassionateness is the distinctive quality of those who have been healed by the mercy of God.

A friend of mine lived on the Continent for some time after the Germans had taken possession of a large part of it. He had known many Germans and had liked them, but with their voluntary or unwilling acceptance of the Nazi creed a change began to show itself. Humility and sympathy gradually disappeared and though they wore no uniform to distinguish them from others Germans could almost be identified by their coarseness and truculence. The substitution of a materialistic creed for a spiritual faith led to the brutalizing of their natures.

That almost always happens when men do not keep their hearts open to the activity of Him who never breaks the bruised reed. But you know who enjoy the works of His mercy by their sensitiveness to human need, their quick responsiveness to man's suffering. Their compassion is not at the mercy of circumstances. Their deeds of kindness and of love are not the product of evanescent emotion. They have a settled habit of mind. Their feelings of sympathy spring from the unfailing sources of God's compassionate love in Jesus Christ.

EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

The Mind of Christ.

'Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.'—Ph 2^5.

The great task set before us as Christian people and a Christian community is to maintain Christian standards and a Christian spirit. Let no one think this is easy. It needs great faith and fortitude in time of peace. It needs still greater patience and prayer in time of war. In the last war, as it went on the national spirit deteriorated. The profiteer feathered his own nest. The man at the front began to say that as he might be dead in a month let him be merry while he lived. The arm-chair critic became more bitter in his denunciation of enemy countries, more ready to believe the worst rumours of atrocities, more violent in his prejudices and antipathies. The churches filled in the early weeks and months: they were supported only by the faithful at the end of the war. This happened not in one country only but amongst the belligerents generally. But it is at least possible to maintain, even through a long war, the ideals and standards proclaimed at the beginning. That is the task set before the Church to-day.

If history teaches anything it teaches that out of adversity good arises. It was in a moment of national calamity, when the good King Uzziah died, that Isaiah saw the Lord, and Israel received a new prophet. It was when Rome, which for centuries had been the metropolis of civilization, was being sacked that Augustine set down his vision of the City of God—a vision which was to be a rallying point for Christendom for centuries more. It was in 1796, when the Channel was so infested with privateers that ships sailed in convoy, that the *Duff*, probably the first missionary ship to sail the high seas, hoisted her flag of 'three white doves with olive branches on a purple field' and set out for the Southern seas. God alone knows what good may emerge from the present chaos. Our duty is to be faithful to Him, to sweeten our lives more than ever with Christian

charity, to do whatever task awaits us without asking for reward, and to maintain, as far as we can, the quietness and the simplicity of Jesus—a quietness and a simplicity which are the outcome of a perfect dependence upon God.

How can Christian standards and a Christian spirit be maintained now?

In the first place, let us give *a warning against emotional excess.*

No one can be a good preacher without strong feeling—he may construct beautifully modelled sermons, but he will never touch men's hearts. Henry Ward Beecher was once asked whether if a minister settled in a place where educational opportunities were few he should not preach educating sermons. His reply was that no education proceeds as fast as that which takes place under a warm and newly developed moral feeling. It is worth while to give his words: 'Men in the ordinary stage are like robins' eggs in the nest; you cannot feed them. Let the robin sit on them a little while, and by and by there will be nothing but four mouths, and as fast as you put in worms they will gulp them. To educate men in the cold and natural state is just like feeding eggs. Warm them, and give them life, and they will eat.'

No one can be a good poet or patriot without strong emotion.

> England, with all thy faults, I love thee still—
> My country! and, while yet a nook is left
> Where English minds and manners may be found,
> Shall be constrain'd to love thee.

> 'If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning.'

Why do men repeat lines like these and never let them die? Not merely because they are beautifully phrased, but because they are full of feeling.

Yet, as the psychologists are never tired of telling us, there are grave dangers connected with the emotional life. A most memorable chapter is William James' on Habit, in which he expatiates on the moral harm that is done when a fine glow of feeling is showed to evaporate without bearing practical fruit. 'There is no more contemptible type of human character than that of the nerveless sentimentalist and dreamer who spends his life in a weltering sea of sensibility and emotion, but who never does a manly concrete deed.' He warns against excessive novel reading and theatre-going. Had he been alive now he would have drawn illustrations from the cinema which with its vulgarity and artificial sentimentality has become the opium of the people.

There is, however, one thing more dangerous emotionally than the cinema or superficial religious revivals, and that is war. No wonder Canon T. W. Pym wrote words as severe as these: 'War wastes much, in life and wealth and happiness, but it is above all perhaps a waste of spiritual energy. Hate is manufactured artificially on all sides; that is to say, energy is spent in the exercise of a bad emotion, deliberately stimulated, which might have been expressed as a good emotion in other ways.'

We may not be able to avoid it altogether, for we are but human. But to be forewarned is to be forearmed. We can start now to discipline ourselves, to tell ourselves that he who goes about with a gloomy face and dolorous speech sins against society, that he who gives way to mass hysteria debases his own nature and lowers the national morale. We must beware of deterioration from moral indignation to bitterness of spirit. Moral indignation is a sign of a sound conscience. Bitterness, vindictiveness, hate, thirst for revenge, are marks of a disordered spirit.

The second thing that seems imperative if we are to maintain Christian standards and a Christian spirit is *discipline in the realm of thought*—discipline of our own mental processes and the determination to think sincerely.

We must watch, for one thing, our use of words. We must be on our guard also against what has been called 'tabloid thinking.'

If, however, we are thus to discipline our hearts and minds we shall need much more than watchfulness and self-control. We shall need all the inspiration and assistance of religion. Especially we shall need the illumination and strength that come from prayer.

The way we lift mind and heart to God at the beginning of the day will make all the difference to the day. The way we commit ourselves to His gracious care before we go to sleep will make all the difference to what goes on in the unconscious mind throughout the night. There is no greater task given to us as individuals than in our own minds and hearts to maintain Christian standards and a Christian spirit, and there is no prospect of success unless we learn or re-learn the way of prayer.[1]

NINTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

Wisdom.

BY THE REVEREND GEORGE M. DRYBURGH, M.A., GLASGOW.

Christ crucified . . . the wisdom of God . . . Christ Jesus, who became unto us wisdom from God.—1 Co $1^{23. 24. 30}$.

In the two opening chapters of 1 Corinthians Paul draws a contrast between the wisdom of God and the wisdom of man. That difference has too often been lost sight of, but it is one that is rooted in experience and in history. By Christ's time Greek philosophy had had its great day and had exerted no small influence even on Hebrew religious thought enshrined in its wisdom literature. Yet while there were those who felt of Christ that 'never man spake like this man,' and 'wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth,' both Greek and Hebrew wisdom had utterly failed to find in Christ crucified anything but an expression of weakness and folly. And

[1] F. H. Ballard, *Does War Shake Faith?*, 11.

Paul's missionary tours had deepened this conviction.

Inner experience confirms the facts of history as to the contrast between the wisdom of God and the wisdom of man. Virtue is knowledge for the Greek. 'We call him wise,' wrote Plato, 'in virtue of that small part (*i.e.* Reason) which reigns within him and contains within itself a true knowledge of what is advantageous' for the soul. The assumption here—and one still widely held—is that if only men know the good they will follow it. I suppose that is why we are always being exhorted to preach 'the Christian ethic' and leave theology alone. The Cross, we are told, is clouded in theological controversy that the ordinary man cannot understand, and the Resurrection is a matter that he finds it difficult to comprehend as solid fact. But let preachers expound Christ's moral teaching and men will rise to it as a flag unfurls to the breeze. But that is an assumption to which your experience and mine gives the lie. Paul speaks for all of us when he cries, 'to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do' (Ro 7^{18}). It is just here, in face of the insurmountable fact of evil, that human wisdom falls short. It may theorize about evil, sometimes explaining it as a lesser form of good or a stage on the way to perfection, but it is quite unable to deal effectively with the power and guilt of evil.

Yet is it not just in regard to this stupendous fact of evil, so powerfully at work in human life, that we need wisdom? With all our material progress, with the amazing spread of education and expansion of knowledge, are we wiser than our cultivated ancestors? In view of the situation that to-day confronts us, Job's is still the paramount question for every one of us—'Where shall wisdom be found?' Paul and the other New Testament writers do not hesitate for an answer—'In Christ.' Christianity does not offer an answer to all our questions and difficulties and problems, but it tells us where we shall find the wisdom we need to deal with such matters. 'If any of you lack wisdom let him ask of God,' and God's answer is—'Christ.'

Consider, then, two characteristics of the wisdom of God as contrasted with the wisdom of the world.

1. In the first place, the wisdom of God, as revealed to us in Christ is moral rather than intellectual in its fibre. I mean it is the wisdom of God to deal with man at the point of his greatest need. Study Christ in the Gospels and you never find Him playing on the surface or 'explaining' what has gone wrong; nor do you ever get the impression that He is being 'diplomatic.' Both in His overtures and in His answers He always goes to the heart of the matter. How arresting His first words to the man with the palsy—'Son, thy sins be forgiven thee.' No wonder a later writer says—'The word of God is sharper than any two-edged sword . . . a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart' (He 4^{2}). This is the kind of wisdom that sees beneath physical ailments to moral failure as the real malady. Nor does Christ ever seem much concerned with men's intellectual ignorance, but rather with their blindness and hardness of heart. The world is not suffering so much from lack of knowledge as from lack of goodness. Stupidity can do much harm, and mental incompetence in high places can, as we know, blunder tragically. But moral perversion, evil in the heart, does infinitely more damage. That darkens and confuses the judgment, and then the blind lead the blind.

The wisdom, therefore, that regards moral failure lightly, that fails to realize the supreme importance of right and wrong in life, is but folly. Is it not evident, and are we not compelled to witness it on a colossal scale to-day, that greed, lust, falsehood, deceit, cruelty, hatred, and other forms of selfishness, work like a corrosive acid on man's highest interests? These are not intellectual errors. The wisdom that appeals to Reason is impotent against them. They are moral forces that defy reason, shatter ideals, ruin man's noblest plans. We are likely to be in danger of a plethora of schemes for the brave new world after the war, economic, political, educational, and even ecclesiastical—but none of them able to deal with the most radical of all problems, the one power that wrecks man's greatest endeavours—the power of evil. In a word, in the crisis now facing mankind, it is the most utter folly to leave out Christ.

For it is at this crucial point of man's deepest need, the place where he needs wisdom most, at the very root of his failure, his sinfulness, and guilt, that the wisdom of God in Christ begins. Christ crucified is God in His wisdom dealing effectively and finally with the worst of all human ills, man's moral enslavement. Here is the one power that liberates and transforms all sorts and conditions of men. This is the only wisdom that gets to the root of things, and that 'works,' that is really valid for you and me. In Christ the wisdom of God is brought to bear on 'the human situation' and does not fail.

2. Secondly, and following upon that, the wisdom Christ brings consists in spiritual insight rather than intellectual shrewdness born of experience of the world. One of the greatest sayings of Christ occurs in a prayer—'I thank thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.' It is of a piece with His other saying—'Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye cannot enter the kingdom of heaven.' How different that from the common estimate that wisdom belongs to the man who has seen much of 'life,' who knows every man has his price, who has seen too much ever to give way to enthusiasms, to whom the years have brought a mild and benevolent cynicism, who has cultivated a detachment that never allows anything to become too personal, who prides himself on being able to see every side of a question and so is never 'taken in'!

But is there any resemblance between that and Jesus Christ, and is that the kind of heart that enters the Kingdom of Heaven? Surely not.

Baron von Hügel, in one of his letters, tells of a visit paid him by his great friend Professor Kemp Smith, of Edinburgh, and of a number of striking things the Professor said. One was 'that the age of the largest spiritual mortality amongst men was in middle life. That he had been first struck with this when a great gathering of all its past and present students took place at Princeton University, U.S.A. You had to pass over the young men, some of whom indeed looked unsettled, uncertain, but not lost to faith and heroism, and to move on to the men in their forties: and, alas, how many self-centred, dried-up, all to pieces, cynical countenances!' No, the wisdom that is in Christ can never become like that. You do not need to grow old and astute and cynical to be wise. True wisdom lies in that simplicity of mind that comes out of a pure heart and a clear conscience. Many a man has grown hard and cynical because he has lost that and thinks he cannot get it back again. But just here speaks the wisdom of God made known in Christ—'Come now, let us reason together: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.' No human wisdom can speak like that.

What a change comes over the man who has opened his heart to that divine wisdom! How deeply and truly he sees into the life of things, into men, because the eyes of his understanding are enlightened by the mind of Christ. In one of his books Professor Denney tells ministers, in his incisive way, never to forget that some poor old woman in their congregation who has the Spirit of Christ in her heart will know in ten minutes whether the preacher has the same gift. 'The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned.' Denney's old woman never mistakes human impressiveness in a preacher for the power of the Spirit.

There is undoubted need for greater efficiency in the organized life of the Church, a wiser use of man-power and resources. But let that not blind us to the far greater need of men and women endowed with the wisdom of God that Christ brings and makes available for all; a wisdom that is moral in its texture; a wisdom that gives spiritual insight into the deep things of God and into the deep needs of men, and that makes its first concern the meeting of these two deeps that in every generation call one to the other.

TENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY.

The Comfort of Religion.

BY THE REVEREND ARTHUR J. HICHENS, PLYMOUTH.

'Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God.' —Is 40[1].

Truth is many-sided, and it is only possible to take one segment at a time. When we deal with the gospel we are only able to glance at this aspect or that of its message. Thus every sermon is incomplete, stressing some part of the truth, but not claiming to be the whole.

It is necessary to mention that, if we are to think now about the comfort of religion. For surely comfort does not adequately summarize the message of the Christian gospel? There are sayings of Jesus that afford no consolation whatsoever. They are sharp, stabbing words, which speak of the disturbance of religion. After all, Christ came to disturb. He was, and is, the world's most disturbing personality. The fact is that both disturbance and comfort are found in the Christian religion, and although we shall turn our minds to the latter emphasis we acknowledge the validity of the former.

These lovely old words, 'Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God,' were spoken by a prophet of the sixth century before Christ. His name is unknown to us, although for convenience we call him Deutero-Isaiah. It seems that he ministered to a group of faithful Jews in exile about the period when Cyrus became King of Media. His message was in contrast with that of earlier prophets. They had spoken chiefly of the judgment of Jehovah on wicked Israel. He spoke of consolation. They had preached in sombre tones. He spoke with a lilt in his voice. He said; 'Ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with singing.'

Consider those who listened to this great prophet. They were but a forlorn group of strangers in a foreign land. Hear their plaintive cry:

> 'By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion. We hanged our harps upon the willows in the mist thereof. For there they that carried us away captive required of us a song; and they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion. How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?'

Try to imagine with what exultation those stricken people heard the prophet's message of hope! He foresees that Cyrus will conquer Babylon, that hated enemy of Israel, and will permit the Jews to return to their own land. In point of fact this did happen. Cyrus issued an edict giving permission to the Jews to return home, and expressly encouraged them to rebuild the ruined sanctuary at Jerusalem.

We speak of events which happened two thousand five hundred years ago. Up to that period no prophet had clearly said that Jehovah was the Creator of the world; that He was its Master and its Maker. This prophet was the first to enunciate, unmistakably, such a concept of Yahweh.

The glorious impudence of it! A preacher whose congregaton is but a group of captives set in the midst of an alien and triumphant empire. They see the majestic temples, the bejewelled idols, and they hear this prophet cry aloud that God is Maker and Master of all. There is ironical laughter at the idols. Fancy a god made by the hands of a carpenter! Ah, this man believed in the Omni-

potence of God. Because of that he could speak of comfort and say :

> 'I, even I, am he that comforteth you : who art thou, that thou art afraid of man that shall die . . . and hast forgotten the Lord thy Maker, that stretched forth the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth ?'

This much is obvious. Those exiled Jews in Babylon, long, long ago, badly needed some message of comfort. Are we not in like need to-day ? The international scene is such as to fill the sensitive soul with horror. To what chaos has man's widespread sin brought us all. Indeed, we know not what the future hath of marvel or surprise. Can we have real comfort in a world gone mad ? We can. If we are convinced of the reality of God ; if we believe in His all-powerful love, then we can know a deep and abiding comfort within. Apart from God life has no vestige of meaning. Without Him there is no answer to the riddle of the universe. But the Christian quite dogmatically asserts that God is the one great Reality. He is the final answer to every question wrung from the agonized soul of man. And if He is the focal point of all our thinking, then we may have comfort indeed.

The old prophet believed it impossible that God could be finally defeated. Oh for the ecstasy of a faith which declares that the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth ! The little systems of men have their day and cease to be. God is eternal. He it is before whose face the generations rise and pass away. To acknowledge that eventually God will reign is to possess a comfort of which nothing and no one can rob you.

This comfort does not consist in any evasion of stern facts. It does mean that our outward circumstances have not power to touch our inner certitude. The poet Shelley wrote :

> I could lie down like a tired child,
> And weep away the life of care
> Which I have borne and yet must bear.

There you have the victory of the outward. Compare that with the saying of St. Paul : 'I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therein to be content.' You see, he was independent of the exterior elements of life.

A little girl, when asked to recite the twenty-third Psalm, started with an inaccuracy that ought to be profoundly accurate for the Christian. She said : 'The Lord's my Shepherd. That's all I want !' There is an incomparable comfort known only to those who regard God as their chief necessity.

Let us finish with a reminder that there is comfort too in thinking of that larger life into which we shall one day enter. The Jews, of whom we have been thinking, wanted so much to return to Jerusalem. They yearned to go back home. We shall go home—the Father's home—the new Jerusalem.

How often, when confronted with life's tragic happenings, with much that defies explanation, do we cry to God : Why ? Why ? Think as hard and long as you may about some of the great problems, and in the end you must confess that some questions will never be answered here. Would that we all had a childlike trust which believes that the answers will be given us, eventually, by God Himself.

As a youngster I well remember a lonely widow who often shared the fellowship of our home. Just after she had lost her son she asked me to sing a hymn which seemed to comfort her. It went :

> We'll catch the broken threads again,
> And finish what we here began ;
> Heaven will the mysteries explain,
> And then, ah, then, we'll understand.

Surely there is a right comfort in the belief that finally 'Heaven will the mysteries explain ?'

Puzzled by calamity we may be, yet we can face life unafraid. For Jesus promised His followers : 'I will not leave you comfortless—orphans, desolate, forlorn.' And to follow Jesus means to belong to the God of all comfort.

Contributions and Comments.

Further Note on Ephesians ii. 14.

In a note on this verse on p. 242 of the April 1942 issue, Professor F. D. Coggan suggests that when Paul wrote εἰρήνη he was thinking in the back of his mind of the term שֶׁלֶם peace offering. This may indeed have been the case, since in matters of exegesis exactness of interpretation is not always found, and the Epistle to the Hebrews and Philo show us what can actually be done with the Septuagint given determination and prior convictions.

There are, however, two objections, and to these there may be added an alternative suggestion.

1. The leap from εἰρηνικός to εἰρήνη is greater than Professor Coggan suggests. LXX is evidently very careful to translate שֶׁלֶם by εἰρηνικός and not by εἰρήνη, though it sometimes uses εἰρηνικός for שְׁלוֹם, a fact which counts against Professor Coggan's suggestion rather than in favour of it. These latter instances are Gn 37^4; and all instances of the Greek word in Deuteronomy (3), the Psalms (3), and the Twelve Prophets (5 with one

doubtful). See also Aquila in Ps 54(55)[21]. There is no case on record of εἰρήνη for שֶׁלֶם.

2. With respect to the use of εἰρηνικός and σωτήριον for שֶׁלֶם. It is not enough to say that εἰρηνικός occurs 'frequently' in Samuel, Kings, and Proverbs. The fact is that it is the exclusive LXX equivalent in these books, just as σωτήριον is always the equivalent elsewhere, including (a fact which is of prime importance in this discussion) all the technical cases in Leviticus. It is true that εἰρηνικός stands thrice in Leviticus (3^1 6^9 7^{13}) for שֶׁלֶם in Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion; and ten times in other Greek Versions according to Hatch and Redpath, but this is no evidence so far as Paul and the LXX are concerned, and in any case it is εἰρηνικός and not εἰρήνη.

The alternative suggestion is: Why seek any farther than Is 53^5, where Hebrew has שְׁלוֹמֵנוּ and LXX has εἰρήνης ἡμῶν. The correspondence in the Greek is exact, except for the necessary alteration in the case. The Old Testament context leaves nothing to be desired. There is, however, one element missing, and this would appear to be the essence of Professor Coggan's note, since he refers also to 2 Co 5^{21}. This element concerns the Temple ritual sacrificial system. Incidentally, it is unfortunate that חַטָּאת ἁμαρτία is still given the meaning sin offering (with the latter word in italics). It was not an offering at all, as G. B. Gray (*Sacrifice in the Old Testament*, 59 ff.) has shown. Rather it was a means of removing sin, and in no sense an offering to God.

The continual, and growing, modern tendency to speak loosely of a phrase or an idea as being 'sacrificial,' and then to identify this with the Old Testament sacrificial system is much to be deprecated from the point of view of scholarship, however much it may be desirable from other points of view. A test case is Is 53. It is undoubtedly the case that this chapter is 'sacrificial' and equally clear that the idea is 'substitutional,' but on the other hand the chapter has nothing at all to do with the Temple sacrificial system. The reference in *v.*[7] to 'the lamb that was led to the slaughter' has as much, and as little, to do with the Temple ritual as its parallel phrase 'as a sheep that before her shearers is dumb.' If there is any meaning at all in anything that has been written concerning Hebrew parallelism, the reference must be to the innocent dumbness and the helplessness of a lamb at the slaughterer's and of a sheep at the shearing, both of them ordinary occupations in ordinary civil life.

Or again, with reference to *v.*[10], נפשו does not mean 'his soul,' but simply 'him,' as an examination of Deutero-Isaiah's use of נפשׁ with suffixes will show. Further, it is not the case that אשׁם must be interpreted with reference to the so-called 'guilt-offering' of the Temple ritual. This use with respect to animal victims in the Temple is confined to Ezk 40 to end, Priestly Code and the Chronicler. Elsewhere the word means 'compensatory payment, gift, substituted restitution' and such kindred ideas. The evidence again is to be found in Gray (*ib.*, 61 ff.) to which may be added the use of the word אשׁם in the Ras Shamra Tablets (see Jack, *The Ras Shamra Tablets*, 30).

It is much to be desired that men should think in 'sacrificial' terms, particularly when such sacrifice is vicarious, since in this is to be found the secret of the Love of God. It is not, however, to be desired that the Temple sacrificial system should intrude into passages where it does not properly belong.

NORMAN SNAITH.

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Notes on the Cry of Forsakenness on the Cross.

The identification, in love, of our Lord with us men in our sin, seems to give the key to interpret His cry from the Cross, 'My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?' Sin being, in its essence, separation from God, and Jesus, from the beginning of His mission, having made the sin of men His own, the crux of the Cross for Him was that on it He experienced for us sin's separation from God. Such was the cup—no fear of death came near His soul—from drinking which He shrank in Gethsemane, which after struggle He accepted with His, 'Not my will, but thine, be done,' and which at last at Calvary He drained to the last drop and the very dregs. All the anguish of conscious separation from His Father utters itself in that awful cry, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?'

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Entre Nous.

L. P. Jacks

In his eighties, Dr. Jacks has looked back a long way and traced the course of his life with a frankness and intimacy that make *The Confession of an Octogenarian* (Allen & Unwin; 15s. net) unusually interesting. Dr. Jacks has written over thirty books, but this is probably the best of them, and, as most of his books were cast in story form, he brings a practised hand to the story of his own experiences. He prefers the term 'Confession' to 'Autobiography' in his own

case, because it indicates the writer's intention not to spare himself in his effort to tell the truth and because it better describes the humility of his disclosures. But there is nothing sensational in these confessions. And one does not gather much about any definite weaknesses in the author—probably because there are not many!

Dr. Jacks comes of a middle-class shopkeeping family, but he can tell about both his great-grandfathers (which not all middle-class people can do) and he finds traces of a remoter Huguenot ancestry. His father was not a success as a business man. He was given more to intellectual pursuits. His failure as a shopkeeper brought very hard times to the family, and things would have been even worse but for the courage and tenacity of the mother, who was one of these strong silent women capable of bearing any burdens. It is easy to see what qualities the distinguished son inherited from each.

Dr. Jacks was a promising student when his father failed, and the failure closed to him what looked a brilliant opportunity. He was forced to take up teaching and drifted from school to school, each one worse than the last, and all containing schoolmasters whom the young Jacks frankly confesses he hated. In this dilemma London University proved his salvation, with its non-resident studentship and its offer of degrees to all who would work for them. 'Thank God for London University,' he exclaims. After London University the current ran more smoothly. He entered Manchester New College, and here he was deeply disappointed with the teaching of Martineau, who had been a kind of hero to him. Martineau had a philosophy and a sonorous eloquence, but he could not teach, and this disability seems to have afflicted the staff generally.

Dr. Jacks became a preacher after the Unitarian faith, and it is interesting to observe the way in which this faith came to him. The men who influenced him most deeply were Matthew Arnold, whose 'Literature and Dogma' was the most decisive factor in the formation of his religious creed, and Stopford Brooke, who had just left the Anglican Communion and was drawing large congregations at Bedford Chapel. Dr. Jacks married one of his daughters and became his assistant for a time. Another definite influence was Josiah Royce, under whom he studied during a visit to America and whose idea of The Beloved Community became part of Dr. Jacks' spiritual outlook.

Dr. Jacks ministered to two notable congregations besides Bedford Chapel. He succeeded the famous Charles Beard at Liverpool, where the congregation was largely aristocratic, and then went to Birmingham, where the congregation included Joseph Chamberlain in its membership. During the nine years of Dr. Jacks' pastorate Chamberlain was twice in Church, but, to make up for this deficiency, the minister was often at Highbury! 'On one occasion he showed me round his famous orchid houses. Pausing before an orchid of great beauty, he pointed out the astonishing arrangement Nature had made for the fertilization of its flowers. "And the scientific people tell me," said he in conclusion, "that it has all come about by chance. *Rubbish!*" Which is precisely what it will always be to the Common Man.'

The pulpit, however, was not to hold Dr. Jacks long. His greatest opportunity came when he was appointed Principal of Manchester College, which was now located at Oxford and had dropped the 'New' from its name, and also Editor of the newly founded *Hibbert Journal* which he has conducted for over forty years, and through which he has probably exercised his widest influence on current theological thinking.

At a critical period of his life Jacks had been impressed by Matthew Arnold's 'Power not ourselves making for righteousness.' This was the seed that grew to such a rich flower in his life. Dr. Jacks' religion was a belief in such a power pressing on us always and everywhere, awakening the Psalmist to song and the Prophet to preach. Religion was not merely a belief in this power but a response of the whole man to its pressure. 'I saw God as all men see the light, not as shining in vacuo, but as a universal illumination reflected by every object on which it shone.' Religion is 'the response of the *whole* man to the *whole* of his experience.' This presents a striking parallel to the conclusions of General Smuts which he calls 'Holism.' Dr. Jacks does not mention Smuts, but his ultimate faith is not dissimilar from that of the eminent statesman.

There is a chapter in this book near the end with the title 'My Discovery of the New Testament' which has a place in Dr. Jacks' religious thought. He began to study the New Testament, not for critical purposes or for 'texts' and 'subjects,' but to see what it was all about. And his conclusion from this first-hand, open-minded reading is that it is all about immortality. This is the unifying element in the New Testament. This brings the Epistles into line with the Gospels. This is the burden of all the books and the key to the problem of the Person of Christ. There is no attempt here to bring this into relation with the 'Holism' of the main religious outlook. But we can see how easily this may be done.

This delightful 'Confession' will be widely read because of the distinction of its author. It reveals a very attractive personality, a man well aware of the tragedy in life and boldly giving it a place in his final creed, a man who has gone through storm and stress and been left unembittered, who has turned every experience to account and found God in it, who has enjoyed the friendship of the great and remains unspoiled. No one could help being the better of contact with this genial, kindly, cultured octogenarian.

A Happy Man.

'Were I to be asked, "Are you, in your old age, a happy man?" the best prompt answer I could give would be to tell the questioner that he had asked a foolish question. To say that I am happy and to say that I am not would be equally untrue or even meaningless. Perfectly happy I certainly

am not—who could be in 1941? Who ever was? But then I have no desire to be. Perfect happiness, says Victor Hugo, is a terrible thing. The two words "perfect" and "happiness" run easily off the tongue and make an attractive pair, but they also make nonsense. The soul of man, which in my philosophy includes the body, and is just as visible, thrives best on a mixed diet in which pain, and not a mere pinch of it either, is a necessary ingredient. So too is pleasure, but I am inclined to think that the amount of pain which the soul can assimilate with benefit to itself is greater than the amount of pleasure.' [1]

Solid but Cold.

When Manchester College was established at Oxford an ecclesiastic said, '"The erection of that building in Oxford is an impertinence. Even the architecture is obtrusively Unitarian: solid but cold." "Yes," answered his friend, "built to last, not to please. You can imagine it lasting to the Day of Judgment." "Ah," said the ecclesiastic, "I can imagine it lasting to the Day of Judgment. *But not afterwards.*"' [2]

What is wrong with the Churches?

'The assumption constantly repeated in this discussion is that the *wording* of religion by the Churches in creeds and formularies has fallen out of harmony with modern thought; that is what is wrong with the Churches; and the remedy lies in getting things differently *said*, in finding new forms of wording which modern thought can endorse and sanction. The improved forms are variously specified, but there is general agreement in regarding modern thought as the source of the marching orders to which theology must conform its steps. The position of religion in relation to modern thought is thus made subordinate and dependent. But may it not be that the right relationship between the two is here inverted? Can a religion which waits for the sanction of modern thought be rightly called a religion at all? Instead of asking what is wrong with the Churches, ought we not to be asking what is wrong with modern thought?' [3]

The Good News.

'Spurgeon, the great preacher, had a story about one of his fellow ministers who went to the house of a poor old woman with a contribution of money for the payment of her rent. He knocked again and again, but failed to get any response. Nevertheless the old woman was all the time within, and her explanation afterwards was, "I heard the knocking, but I thought it was the man come to ask for the rent. . . ."

'He who stands at the door has come with a gift, but we are so ready to think that He has come for a payment. The knock is a Saviour's knock, but we are so ready to think it a Taskmaster's. That is perhaps the greatest misunderstanding to which religion has been subject in every age. . . . We turn our religion into a code of good conduct, an ideal to be striven for, a law to be obeyed. Law and commandment, good conduct and the quest of the ideal, hard work and loyal service must all be given due place; and to deny them place would be to fall into the error opposite to that which we are now considering. . . .

'Christianity is, when fundamentally regarded, not a law but a gospel. It was as a gospel that it was preached from the very beginning. The word "gospel" or (in its original Greek form) "evangel" means good news; and good news is precisely what Christianity sets out to be. The little wireless listener who, on being taken to church for the first time, remarked that she "liked the music better than the news" well understood what the sermon was meant to be, however just or unjust may have been her estimate of its quality on that occasion. The Gospel is news of salvation. It is news of redemption. It is news, not of rent demanded, but of rent paid.' [4]

Luke xviii. 11.

'There seems indeed to be no point at which my spiritual life does not fall victim to this infinitely regressive character of sin. I no sooner become aware of my pride than I become proud of being aware of it; and then if I reproach myself for this second sin, I go on at once to commit a third—I become proud of being aware of being aware of it. . . . Or again, I grow sinfully self-confident over the very discovery of my sinful self-confidence. I have come to realize my own helplessness and inability to make any contribution to my salvation; yet since this realization alone makes it possible for me to entrust my whole salvation to Christ alone, I begin to think that I have made at least *this* contribution to my own salvation, namely that, unlike *some* people I could mention, I am at least aware of my own inability to contribute to it; and thereby I prove more conclusively than ever that I am *not* aware of my own inability to contribute to it. I remember being told in New York of a Sunday-school teacher who concluded a lesson on the parable of the Pharisee and the Publican by saying, "And now, children, let us thank God that we are not as this Pharisee."' [5]

[1] L. P. Jacks, *The Confession of an Octogenarian*, 4.
[2] *Ib.*, 169. [3] *Ib.*, 224.
[4] J. Baillie, *Invitation to Pilgrimage*, 48. [This book will be reviewed next month.—Ed.]
[5] *Ib.*, 60.

Printed in Scotland by Morrison & Gibb Limited, Tanfield Works, and Published by T. & T. Clark, 38 George Street, Edinburgh. It is requested that all literary communications be addressed to The Editor, King's Gate, Aberdeen, Scotland.